

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: IDENTIFYING THE SUPPORTS AND CHALLENGES OF HIGH SCHOOL LATINO ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS.

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Two out of three English Language Learners (ELLs) graduate from secondary schools nationwide. Of the nearly five million ELLs in public schools, more than 70% of these students' first language is Spanish. In order to understand and resolve this phenomena and in an effort to increase the number of graduates, this research examined what high school Latino ELLs identified as the major external and internal factors that support or challenge them on the graduation pathway.

The study utilized a 32 quantitative and qualitative question student survey, as well as student focus groups. Both the survey and the focus groups were conducted in English and Spanish. The questions considered the following factors: 1) value of education; 2) expectations in achieving their long-term goals; 3) current education levels; 4) expectations before coming to the United States; 5) family obligations; and 6) future aspirations. The survey was administered to 159 Latino ELLs enrolled in grades 9-12. Research took place at three high schools that provide English for Speakers of Other

Languages (ESOL) classes in a large school system in the Mid-Atlantic region. The three schools involved in the study have more than 1,500 ELLs. Two of the schools had large ESOL instructional programs, and one school had a comparatively smaller ESOL program. The majority of students surveyed were from El Salvador (72%) and Guatemala (12.6%).

Using Qualtrics, an independent facilitator and a bilingual translator administered the online survey tool to the students during their ESOL classes. Two weeks later, the researcher hosted three follow-up focus groups, totaling 37 students from those students who took the survey. Each focus group was conducted at the three schools by the lead researcher and the translator. The purpose of the focus group was to obtain deeper insight on how secondary age Latino ELLs defined success in school, what they identified to be their support factors, and how previous and present experiences helped or hindered their goals. From the research findings, ten recommendations range from suggested policy updates to cross-cultural/equity training for students and staff; they were developed, stemming from the findings and what the students identified.

IDENTIFYING THE SUPPORTS AND CHALLENGES OF
HIGH SCHOOL LATINO ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

by

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education
2016

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Foreword

There's the story of the couple on the beach that are throwing the sea stars back into the water as they walk along the beach covered with stranded sea stars. A person watching asks the woman why she is bothering to put some of them back into the water when there are so many in need. The woman responds to the onlooker as she gently returns another to the ocean, "To this one, it makes a difference." Hopefully, this dissertation will help make a difference to more students in how we support our English Language Learners, so that we can help more of them make a difference in their own lives on their pathway to success.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Anthony Michael Sloan, for his loving and adoring supporting in more ways than I ever knew possible, through all the late nights and long weekends with love, ice cream, words of encouragement, and patience; to my sons, Ian, Sebastian, Solomon, and Salvador, for cheering me on and forgiving me for the missed opportunities these last few years; to my parents, Dr. Julie and Rick Hanks, for editing, listening, surveying more than 150 students, and always believing in me; and to my parents-in-law, Dorothy & Warren Powell, for making great meals, kid watching when possible, and providing unconditional love.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. David Imig, for his encouragement throughout the journey; to my friend and colleague, Dr. Melissa Kochanowski, for sharing her dissertation tips, wisdom, and snacks; to Dr. McLaughlin for suggested revisions and stretching my paradigms; to Dr. Davis, Dr. Cohen, Dr. Shetley, and Dr. Norris for your constructive insight and wisdom; to all of the support in the district for giving me access to our students and for your encouraging words; to Batch, Regina, Sue, Irena, and Divine for all of their trust, emails, and classroom time; to Dr. Lancaster and Dr. Austria for cheering me through this process; to the ESOL teachers and the “International Programs” team for their dedication to supporting our students; to Jessica, Sandra, Jennifer, and Kiara for translating and interpreting with their linguistic giftedness and full hearts; to Tina Donnelly for her encouraging words and lending me her students; and to all the English Language Learners in our schools who are seeking their own American dreams.

Table of Contents

Foreword.....	ii
Dedication.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Tables.....	viii
List of Figures.....	x
 Section 1: Introduction to the Problem and Literature Review.....	 1
Identifying the Problem.....	1
Problem Statement.....	1
Evidence of the Problem.....	2
Increasing Gap between Secondary ELLs and Mainstream.....	2
Student Attrition.....	4
Economic Impact.....	5
Defining Common Terms.....	5
Latino and Hispanic.....	6
Dropouts.....	6
Addressing the Challenges of the Latino ELL Graduation Rate.....	7
Limited Time to Prepare for Graduation.....	9
Ninth Grade Matriculation.....	10
Placement of Newcomers into Ninth Grade.....	10
High Stakes Testing.....	11
Family Reunification, Expectations, and Obligations.....	12
Family Obligation Attitudes.....	14
Community Influence.....	15
Latino Successes and Challenges in School.....	16
Personal and Cultural Challenges.....	17
Cultural Dissonance.....	18
Policies and Politics.....	19
Challenges to Legal Immigration.....	22
The Immigration Act of 1965.....	22
Immigration and Customs Enforcement with Minors.....	23
School System Policies.....	24
Children Seeking Refuge.....	24
Renewal of Approval Status.....	26
Centering Research around Latino ELLs.....	27
Research Questions.....	28
Prior Attempts to Address the Problem.....	28
The Dream Act: Locally and Nationally.....	28
Support from the Center for World Students (CWS)	29
AUD and Addressing the Dropout Rate.....	31
ESOL English Course Rescheduling.....	32

Strategies to Address the Dropout Rate.....	33
Grants and Taskforces at the District Level.....	33
National Dropout Prevention Center/Network.....	35
Alternative Schooling.....	35
Latino Leadership in the School District.....	36
Career Pathways.....	37
Potential Solutions.....	38
Section 2: Methodology.....	40
Rationale of the Study.....	40
Purpose of the Study.....	40
Survey.....	41
Focus Groups.....	41
Research Questions.....	42
Design and Methods.....	42
Student Surveys.....	42
Student Focus Groups.....	44
Participants.....	45
Instrument Design.....	46
Surveys.....	46
Focus Groups.....	47
Pilot Study.....	47
Data Collection Procedures.....	47
Survey.....	47
Focus Groups.....	48
Data Analysis.....	49
Subjectivity of the Researcher.....	49
Analysis, Validation, and Ethical Considerations.....	50
Section 3: Results, Conclusions, and Recommendations.....	51
ELL Student Survey Results.....	52
ELL Focus Groups.....	54
Research Question 1: Support Factors.....	56
Family/Friends Survey Results.....	56
Focus Group Results.....	59
Student/Teacher/School Support Survey Results.....	60
Student/Teacher/School Focus Group Results.....	66
Summary.....	70
Research Question 2: External and Internal Challenges.....	70
Limited Time Survey Results.....	71
Limited Time Focus Group Results.....	76
Cultural Dissonance Survey Results.....	78
Journey to U.S./Reunification Focus Group Results.....	81
Summary.....	86
Research Question 3: Cultural Expectations.....	87
Cultural Expectations Survey Results.....	87

Cultural Expectations Focus Group Results.....	92
Summary.....	92
Research Question 4: Individual Expectations.....	93
Educational Values Survey Results.....	93
Additional Comments from Students.....	95
Student Aspirations Survey Results.....	99
Summary.....	100
Limitations.....	100
Recommendations.....	101
Future Research.....	105
Summary.....	106
Appendix A: Student Survey.....	108
Appendix B: Script to Students before the Survey.....	127
Appendix C: Script to Students before the Survey (Spanish).....	128
Appendix D: Focus Group Questions.....	130
Appendix E: Focus Group Questions in Spanish.....	132
Appendix F: Email to Principals.....	134
Appendix G: Email to Teachers.....	135
Appendix H: Letter to Parents of Students Taking the Survey.....	136
Appendix I: Letter to Parents of Students Taking the Survey (Spanish).....	137
Appendix J: Letter to Parents of Students Participating in Focus Groups.....	138
Appendix K: Aspirations Responses on Survey.....	139
Appendix L: Last Survey Question Open Ended Responses.....	148
References.....	155

List of Tables

Table 1: Center for World Students Registration and ESOL Qualification Numbers by School Year.....	3
Table 2: High School English Language Learners (ELLs) in Anonymous Unified District (AUD) by Years in U.S. Schools.....	4
Table 3: State and District ESOL 4-year Cohort Graduation Rates.....	5
Table 4: New English Language Learners (ELLs) by Spanish Speaking and Non-Spanish Speaking Countries.....	8
Table 5: Ages of Ninth Grade Students in the ESOL Program.....	10
Table 6: Percentage of Students of Compulsory Ages Attending Primary and Secondary School by Country.....	17
Table 7: Survey Response Rate by School.....	53
Table 8: Student Participants by Grade Level.....	53
Table 9: Ages and Grades of Students.....	54
Table 10: Number of Focus Group Participants by Grade and Country of Origin.....	55
Table 11: Percentage of Students Talking about School with Different Family Members or Friends.....	57
Table 12: Percentage of Students Seeking Support for Homework from Different Family Members or Friends.....	58
Table 13: Frequency of Students Talking about Problems with Different Groups.....	58
Table 14: Selected Survey Responses on Family Supports or Non-Support.....	60
Table 15: Characteristics of Respondents' Age-Peer Neighbors and Friends.....	62
Table 16: Student Perspectives of Teachers.....	63
Table 17: Frequency of Students Seeking Support from Different School Staff.....	64
Table 18: Students' Opinions of School.....	66
Table 19: Selected Survey Responses on Students Supporting Students.....	69

Table 20: Students' Ages of Emigrating and Immigrating.....	72
Table 21: Surveyed Students' Years in U.S. by Arrival Date.....	73
Table 22: Prior School Completion Outside and Inside the U.S.....	74
Table 23: Average Amount of Time Spent on Weekly Homework.....	74
Table 24: Student Responses about Having a Job.....	75
Table 25: Student Participation in School Activities.....	76
Table 26: Student Perceptions of Classmates.....	79
Table 27: Student Activities before Coming to the U.S.....	88
Table 28: School Expectations Before and After Coming to the U.S.....	90
Table 29: Student Activities Prior to Starting School in the U.S.....	90
Table 30: Expectations from Self, Family and Teachers in the U.S.....	91
Table 31: Family Expectations for Student in the U.S. Compared to Home Country.....	92
Table 32: Student Opinions about School.....	94
Table 33: Student Opinions about Class.....	95
Table 34: Additional Student Survey Short Responses.....	98

List of Figures

Figure 1: Recruitment of Focus Group Participants at Each School.....	56
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Section 1: Introduction to the Problem and Literature Review

Identifying the Problem

Chavo is 19 years old, and he waits at the school bus stop, deciding whether to go to school or try to get some extra work in the neighborhood. He is in his third year at the high school, and most of his classes are not easy. He has been suspended for standing up for himself when teased, and he is failing history class. His mother, Maria, believes everything is fine.

When Maria left for the United States 16 years earlier, she hugged her three-year-old son Chavo goodbye. Due to immigration laws, Chavo could not travel with her to the United States, so he moved in with his grandmother, remaining in El Salvador. Thirteen years later, the teenager reunited with his mother who now lives in the Mid-Atlantic region of the U.S. to live out the American Dream. Maria dreams about the graduation party she will host for Chavo, not knowing the struggles and obstacles he faces at school. As a high school student who speaks limited English, he has a one-in-three chance of being another high school dropout rather than a successful high school graduate.

Problem statement. Chavo is not alone in this dilemma. There are many students like Chavo, especially in Anonymous Unified District (AUD) where one in five students speak Spanish at home. High school Latino English Language Learners (ELLs) are at a great disadvantage academically and are graduating at a much lower rate than other student groups. This is a major problem for the nation and especially for the school district because of the rapidly growing population of ELLs throughout the county, the limited time secondary ELLs have to grasp English and graduate, and the emotional and social stresses that result from reunification with their parents and family obligations,

expectations to work, or graduation. As the number of Latino ELLs continues to increase in the country, a greater number of students face cultural, linguistic, and academic challenges. Only two out of three Latino ELLs finish high school. This study attempts to provide an insight into the ELL students' perspectives to identify which factors provide the support necessary to help them through high school. The study also examines the students' challenges, backgrounds, and long-term goals.

Evidence of the problem. At the national level, the graduation rate of students who immigrated at the age of 11 years or older and are Latino is 48.5%, compared to the 77.8% of Latino students who are not recent immigrants (Murnane, 2013). Recent immigrants who were White and not Latino were 90%, compared to 86.3% of White students who are not immigrants (Murnane, 2013). Rumberger has identified that many of the students who leave school are ELLs (2011). According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the 4-year graduation rate of ELLs is 59% (2014). This rate is similar for the Latino ELLs in AUD. While this low rate of graduating students should be a concern by the low number itself, it further impacts the district in significant ways: 1) The increasing number of students equates to an increasing number of drop outs who impact the school system data and in turn negatively impact the community; 2) The data are reported by percentages and cohorts, but they do not identify what the magnitude of the dropout rate is at first glance; and 3) The economic impact of dropouts drain the local, state, and national community.

Increasing gap between secondary ELLs and mainstream. At the district level, the number of high school ELLs in need of instructional support increases by nearly 2,000 new students annually (see Table 1). Students who speak a language other

than English at home are identified through a home language survey question on the school intake application. These students are then assessed in English using the World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) intake test known as the WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT). If students score below grade level on the state-mandated test, they are identified for ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages). Each year, more than 6,000 K-12 students register through the Center for World Students (CWS) in AUD. Of these students, more than 60% of the tested students qualify for ESOL, and about 80% of them are Latino/Spanish-speaking students.

Table 1

Center for World Students Registration and ESOL Qualification Numbers by School Year

School Year	High School Registration	ESOL Qualification
2009-2010	2,299	2,033
2010-2011	2,188	1,886
2011-2012	2,107	1,828
2012-2013	2,343	2,022
2013-2014	2,619	2,305
Total	11,556	10,459

The majority of current high school ESOL students are newcomers who have been in the country for less than two years. The average secondary ELL takes ESOL classes for four or five years (see Table 2). The next largest population is students who have been in the country between three to five years. There is also a group of long-term ELLs (LT-ELLs) who have not advanced to mainstream classes, and little research in the district has been done to identify why students who have been in ESOL for over five years have not exited out of the program.

Table 2

High School English Language Learners (ELLs) in Anonymous Unified District (AUD) by Years in U.S. Schools

First U.S. School Year	Years in U.S.	Students (<i>n</i> = 2,733)
2013-14	>1	1,133
2012-13	>2	522
2011-12	>3	381
2010-11	>4	203
2009-10	>5	169
2008-09	>6	98
2007-08	>7	76
2005-06	>8	64
2004 or earlier	>9	87

Note. Data reported to state from November 1 of previous school year to October 31 of current school year.

Student attrition. For the State Education Department (SED), which includes all of the public schools in the state, the four-year graduation rate for students of all racial/ethnic and linguistic backgrounds was 84% compared to 74% in AUD in SY2014. For ELLs, the AUD graduation rate is 21 percentage points lower than the state's overall average. The AUD four-year ELL graduation rate is 63%, which is higher than the state's 57% graduation rate of ELLs (state reportcard.org). At first glance, this number could be perceived as a successful marker; however, this number fails to capture the number of students who left between their 9th and 12th grade cohort. The SY2013 graduation cohort started with 634 ELLs in the 9th grade in SY2010; by SY2013, only 357 ELLs were still attending school as 12th graders (see Table 3). Most ESOL teachers would testify that the majority of those 288 students did not transfer to another school and left school before graduating.

Table 3*State and District ESOL 4-Year Cohort Graduation Rates*

	2014		2013		2012	
District	All	ESOL	All	ESOL	All	ESOL
SED	86%	54%	85%	57%	84%	54%
AUD	77%	56%	74%	63%	73%	57%

Economic Impact

Students who are unable to complete school impact the national economy of the United States as the loss of income will also grow without a trajectory change. The average adult who does not complete high school earns \$19,540 annually; with a high school diploma, the salary averages \$27,380; with a two-year college degree, the salary averages \$36,190; and with a four-year degree, the salary averages \$46,930 (Department of Education, 2009; Alliance in Excellent Education, 2013). At a national average of 1.2 million dropouts a year, the stagnation of income totals over \$1.5 trillion of lost salary (Alliance in Excellent Education, 2013). This loss also impacts local and state funding, as it is a loss of earnings never gained to support families and a loss of earnings not supporting taxes.

Defining Common Terms

The identity of a Latino ELL is a broad label for a population that includes multiple variables that have not been fully explored or examined. Examining these variables may be the key in identifying particular factors that may be impeding our

Latino ELLs' pathway to graduation. In the school district, Latino ELLs represent 17 countries, including the United States.

Latino and Hispanic. While the state and county use the term Hispanic when referring to families who speak Spanish as their first language or come from Latin America Spanish speaking countries, the researcher uses the term Latino to represent Latino/a or Hispanic. The term Hispanic was coined by the United States government in 1970 and is used more commonly in Florida and Texas (MacDonald, 2012).

The groups included under the label “Hispanic” or “Latino” — Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Salvadorans, Colombians, and the many other nationalities from Latin America and even Spain itself — were not “Hispanics” or “Latinos” in their countries of origin; rather, they only became so once they arrived in the United States. (Rumbaut, 2011, p. 1)

Families who have children attending schools in AUD do not initially identify themselves as Hispanic or Latino, but rather the schools classify our Spanish-speaking families as Hispanic or Latino. The Latino student is a nomenclature to encompass students from numerous cultures, countries, and backgrounds who speak Spanish. The terms Hispanic and Latino are social constructs, and they are seen as both an identity and an identifier, especially among the younger generation (Rumbaut, 2011). This generic term is used broadly in school districts, and it leaves little understanding about which “Latino” student is most likely to succeed or more likely to leave high school.

Dropouts. The word dropout is overused and in some ways outdated, as it fails to capture the multiple factors and steps that lead to the action. “Dropouts are individuals who are not enrolled in school and have not graduated” (Rumberger, 2011, p. 47).

Rumberger continues to define dropouts in three different ways: status, event, and/or process. The first way to view a dropout is as a student's status, which can shift from dropout to student based on the moment of time. The second way to view a dropout is as an event, which can be an official or an unofficial removal from school, based on whether the family completed the paperwork or if the student just stopped attending school. The third way to view a dropout is as a process, as it usually takes several steps leading up to it, such as increasing school absences or poor academic performance. Upon arriving in the United States, many Latino ELLs experience an interruption in their education (DeCapua & Marshall, 2011); the delay can continue upon registration at the school district, due to circumstances, such as the lack of proper immunizations or a change in residences, interrupting the flow of a continual education and school enrollment.

Addressing the Challenges of the Latino ELL Graduation Rate

Between 2004 and 2014, AUD's ELL population has more than doubled from over 8,100 to 19,100. Approximately, 80% of those students' first language is Spanish. Between January and September 2014, 6,388 new ELLs enrolled in AUD; within that population, 1,114 of them were unaccompanied minors, students who were seeking refuge and reconnecting with family or distant relatives (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [USDHHS], 2014). The U.S. Department of Homeland Security identified that most of the children who flee from Guatemala are leaving for economic reasons; the children who leave El Salvador and Honduras are leaving to escape violent situations (Gonzalez-Barrera et al., 2014). Most of these students are high school age with interrupted education and speak little to no English. They often arrive as teenagers, as their family or they themselves determine that they are prepared to make the journey to

the United States. Some students travel with family members or friends, some travel unaccompanied by anyone else or anyone they know, and some hire an assistant known as a coyote. At the high school level, most ELL newcomers in AUD come from Spanish-speaking countries, such as El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico (see Table 4).

Table 4

New English Language Learners (ELLs) by Spanish Speaking and Non-Spanish Speaking Countries

	School Year						Total (n = 3,162)
	2009 or earlier (n = 767)	2010 (n = 172)	2011 (n = 213)	2012 (n = 419)	2013 (n = 554)	2014 (n = 1,037)	
Spanish speaking (n = 16)	287	127	146	299	448	919	2,226
Non-Spanish speaking (n = 54)	82	38	59	106	91	97	473
U.S. born	398	7	8	14	15	21	463

There is also a population of students who are known as long-term ELLs, (LT-ELLs) from the United States (420 of the 463 students are Spanish speaking). The goal is for all students to complete high school. Unfortunately, completing high school is not achievable for all students in pursuit of a diploma. ELLs “graduate from high school at far lower rates than do their native English-speaking peers” (Short and Fitzsimmons, 2007, p. 5).

Recurring factors impact Latino student success, including: limited educational

opportunities and time, language and high stakes testing, the challenges of reunification, financial needs and the obligation to work, dangerous communities, personal and cultural challenges, and policies/politics (Behnke et al., 2010; Menjivar, 2008; Zalaquett, 2006). There are also other barriers that minimize the accessibility to graduation and college, such as the students' parents having limited education and being in low wage jobs (Immerwahr, 2006). Less than 40% of Mexican immigrant adults and 51% of other Central American immigrant adults have a high school diploma (US Census, 2010). When dropouts have their own children, the pattern of dropping out often continues with the next generation underperforming in school, having bad behaviors and eventually leaving school without a diploma (Orfield, 2004). Orfield refers to this cycle as a "powerful intergenerational social problem" (2004, p. 2).

Limited time to prepare for graduation. While most ELLs entering kindergarten exit out of ESOL and perform at or above grade level by upper elementary, many secondary ELLs grapple with the limited time to succeed in high school. The majority of ELLs at the high school level are a combination of newly arrived immigrants and students who arrived in upper elementary school or middle school. Students who arrive to the United States as an immigrant teenager after the age of 12 are referred to as the 1.25 generation (Rumbaut, 2004). Rumbaut coined this term to refer to the young adults who are straddling between a first generation and second generation immigrant identity as they transition between two cultures and two traditional value sets, but are closer to the adults who are first generation and further from the children who adapted by entering an American school before the age of 13.

Ninth grade matriculation. AUD's high school Latino students enter grade nine in one of three ways: 1) as newcomers first arriving to the United States, 2) as students matriculating from eighth grade, or 3) as transfer students from within the district or another district in the United States. They may require ESOL support, have exited out of ESOL, or have never required ESOL services. Some of AUD's students are 14 years old, and others may be as old as 21 years of age. They may have prior schooling or have been out of school for years. Some of them work, some wish they worked, and others do not have to work. Students who arrive as unaccompanied minors are required to go to school, whether that was or was not their intention. Some students come to school after having first worked in the U.S. Some of them return to school for a variety of reasons, including wanting to learn more English or planning to graduate high school. At AUD, there is little discussion about these factors and which specific ones are more likely to put our students at risk not to graduate.

Placement of newcomers into ninth grade. Students with limited to no English are placed into ninth grade, regardless of age and the number of credits earned, in order to meet the English credit requirements of SED. The age of a ninth grade incoming high school ELL who speaks no English in SY2014-15 ranged between ages 13 and 21, with the majority being between 14 and 17 years of age (see Table 5).

Table 5

Ages of Ninth Grade Students in the ESOL Program

										All
Age	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Ages
Number	89	464	461	278	279	126	39	9	1	1,746

Many Latino ELLs had only limited education in their home countries. Often their parents have a minimal education and/or are illiterate in their native language. In addition, the majority of students arrive with interrupted education, defined in AUD as an absence of at least six months of schooling. Students who are new to American schools and speak little to no English are “newcomers.” Research in the field of language acquisition references at least five years as the time necessary to master English academic language for students who arrive after age six (Cummins, 1981); however, most newcomers arrive during the school year and have less than four years in which they are expected to graduate.

Teachers play a pivotal role in the success or failure of new immigrant students. Newcomers “may be most receptive to the instruction of educators” when they first arrive (Watkins & Melde, 2010, p. 23). This level of trust and dependency increases the responsibility of the teachers in helping the students’ transition and in creating a sense of security.

High stakes testing. Latino English Language Learners often fall into two subgroups (Limited English Proficiency and Hispanic) that have been monitored in high stakes testing since the implementation of *No Child Left Behind* in 2004. Losen (2004) states that “Anecdotal evidence shows how high test-score accountability inadvertently creates incentives for encouraging low-scoring students to drop out, in subtle to not so subtle ways, which is referred to as a ‘push-out’ phenomenon” (p. 42). Losen explained how schools benefitted by pushing out the low scoring students, which led to an increase in test scores and school performance since the low performing student was not present for the exam.

In order to graduate with a diploma in the state, students are expected to pass four required exams (REs) in the areas of biology, English, algebra, and government. There are two other ways to meet the requirement. Students could earn an RE composite score of over 1,500 based on the total score of all four exams, for example scoring high enough in English to add to a failing grade in algebra and a passing grade in biology that totals 1,500 or more points. Students may also earn points through content specific projects which are content based assignments completed in a teacher directed class or a Saturday study opportunity.

In the district, 50.3% of the Latino seniors in 2011 and 49.2% in 2012 passed all of the RE exams (Estes, 2012). Because of the option to meet the composite or to complete the necessary number of additional projects, most students were successful in meeting the overall requirement through the alternative project. With only 50% of Latino students passing the exams without the project assistance, much discussion is now centered on how students will fare with the new Common Core exams. The new state PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) assessments are computer-based. There is much speculation on how the new assessments will impact the ELL graduation rate and how students new to technology will perform. PARCC is providing all students access through accommodations, including use of an electronic highlighter, oral directions, electronic glossary, and font increase. ELLs will also be provided with extended time, clarification of directions if needed, directions in the student's native language, and a word-to-word dictionary (PARCC, 2015).

Family reunification, expectations, and obligations. Reunification describes the reunion of immigrant students who arrive in the United States to reconnect and live

with their parent(s). For Maria, the time was far longer than anticipated and far more overwhelming when it happened, as her child was filled with resentment and confusion, having to leave his home, his culture, and his caregiver who raised him. This scenario is common for a growing number of families (Suárez-Orozco, Bang, & Kim, 2010). The delays can range from one year to over 15 years for the families who are able to reunify.

Many of the newly arrived students, like Chavo, have taken a treacherous journey to reconnect with family in the United States. The time away from family creates psychological and emotional effects on both the parent and the child who are living apart and unable to visit for years (Arbona, Olvera, Rodriguez, Hagan, Linares, & Wiesner, 2010; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2011). Additionally, these students are adjusting to new cultures, a new society, and new family members, such as stepfathers and step-siblings, while missing family members in their home country (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2011).

“Migration is one of the most radical transitions and life changes an individual or family can endure” (Perez, Espinoza, Ramos, Coronado, & Cortes, 2009, p. 149). The challenges are magnified in situations of reunification of immigrant families. In some situations, the parent left the child with the other parent or grandparents in the home country while they immigrated to the United States; sometimes, both parents leave the child with a relative or other extended family members (Bernhard, Landolt, & Goldring, 2005; Foner, 2009; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2011). The psychological impact on the child is often difficult while the family is separated and later when they are united (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2011). Upon arrival in the United States, the reunion is often disappointing and creates conflict, as the parent is no longer as familiar to them (Artico, 2003; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2011).

The reunifying child does not always understand the parents' decision to immigrate to the United States in hope of finding better opportunities to support the family. Parents become frustrated as their children often fail to appreciate the emotional and monetary sacrifices they made for their children or no longer respect their parental role as an authoritarian figure when they reunite (Abrego, 2006; Dreby, 2007; Foner, 2009; Menjívar & Abrego, 2009; Suárez–Orozco et al., 2011).

For Maria and Chavo, the time apart was far longer than anticipated and overwhelming when they reconnected, as Chavo was filled with resentment and confusion. This scenario is common for a growing number of families (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010). Often reconnecting and enforcing discipline are challenging after the children may have had much leniency in their home country or are dealing with mixed feelings of resentment after being away from the parent for so many years (Bernhard et al., 2005).

Family obligation attitudes. In America, teenagers are often given a window of time to transition from adolescence to adulthood. For the new immigrant student who is not economically stable, exploring options and delaying adult responsibilities are not always an option (Sánchez, Esparza, Colon, & Davis, 2010). “Study findings denote that urban, low-income Latinos from immigrant families experience a transition particularly imbued with stressors and challenges” (Sánchez et al., p. 881, 2010). Many newly arrived students have a sense of obligation to earn income that is shared with the immediate family or sent back to the family in their home country. Fuligni and Pedersen coined the term “family obligation attitudes,” referring to the financial responsibility to which a family member must support one another or must accommodate the expectations of family as they make choices (2002, p. 856).

Families in many of these developing nations rely on the money sent from the United States, and students feel a sense of obligation to send money back to their home country. The short term need for income often outweighs the long term goal of school. On average, Central American immigrants send between \$100 and \$150 a month to their families, totaling between \$2.5 and \$2.6 billion payments to El Salvador and Guatemala annually (Menjívar, 2008, p. 184). One in five people born in El Salvador have immigrated to the United States, totaling more than 1.1 million Salvadoran immigrants (Terrazas, 2010). AUD's boundaries rank fifth in the nation for hosting the largest Salvadoran population and tenth for the largest Guatemalan population (Motel and Patten, 2012).

The parent is usually supporting two households: the American residence and the home country residence where the caregiver (often a family member) is supporting the children. "With few opportunities to earn enough money to significantly improve the children's living conditions, immigrant parents and their children must negotiate intergenerational dynamics within the difficult context of legal and economic restrictions" (Menjívar & Obrego, 2009, p. 161-62). Many families are also paying off the debts incurred from the teenager's travel expenses and fees.

Community influence. Another challenge facing Latino ELLs is gangs. In May 2014, three Latino students (ages 15, 14, and 13) were arrested after the alleged killing of a 19-year-old student (who was an ESOL graduate from Guyana) in what the media described as possibly being gang affiliated (Bui and Wiggins, 2014). Two of the students were U.S. born and had been in the school district since pre-kindergarten. One of them had been in ESOL for ten years, retained in kindergarten, and dropped out of middle

school a month earlier. In December 2014, another alleged killing left a high school sophomore dead and led to the arrest of three reported gang members, one of which was a fellow high school student (Bui, Harris, & Wiggins, 2014).

While some students flee their home countries to avoid gang recruitment or threats, other students seek them out for a sense of belonging in the United States. Schools can serve as focal points for students to find positive forms of affiliation by providing art, sports, and mentoring groups that create social networks that are legal and safe (Unterberger, 2009.) While incidents are often isolated outside of school, they can be a concern in the community and impact families, students, and educators.

Latino Successes and Challenges in School

The success stories of Latino students from middle school to college, highlighting the more positive and successful factors, have not focused specifically on Latino ELLs. Garcia-Reid explored students' school involvement by conducting a self-administered survey of 133 Latinas from one high school in New Jersey that was predominately Latino (2007). The survey collected and analyzed data regarding support from family and school, neighborhood safety, and school involvement from the students' perspectives. Bordes-Edgar, Arredondo, Kurpius, & Rund, as well as Zalaquett's, studies conducted follow-up studies on Latino college students at least four years after starting their university coursework.

Family and teacher support, belief in one's self, and positive peer relationships are factors that helped Latino students be academically successful (Bordes-Edgar et al., 2011; Zalaquett, 2006). Traditionally, parents of Latino ELLs are not directly involved in their children's education; they are rarely a part of parent/teacher/student associations and only

reach out to the school when the school asks them directly to be involved. They often value education, and they support their children's success and achievements by providing meals and necessary materials. Mentors and/or teachers often mentor ELLs about getting involved in extra-curricular activities, as well as help them transition to the next academic level.

Personal and cultural challenges. In many Central American countries, completing eighth grade is an accomplishment. This achievement is also a rite of passage from childhood to adulthood. Throughout Latin America, compulsory education ends at a younger age: 13 in Guatemala; 14 in the Dominican Republic; and 15 in El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico (UNESCO, 2003). In Table 6, the compulsory age in which a student must attend school, as well as the percentage of students attending elementary and secondary schools are listed for the countries most represented in AUD among the Latino ELL population: El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic.

Table 6

Percentage of Students of Compulsory Ages Attending Primary and Secondary School by Country

Country	Compulsory Ages	Primary Attendance	Secondary Attendance
El Salvador	7-15	N/A	54.2%
Guatemala	6-13	84.3%	37%
Honduras	6-15	87.6%	N/A
Dominican Republic	6-14	92.5%	59.5%
Mexico	6-15	99.4%	75.3%

Another factor creating discord for many of the newly arrived “students” is that

prior to coming to the United States, they may have already acquired the responsibilities of an adult wage earner or may even be a parent. Many of the students have been living independently or have been traveling with a long distance with a group in which they were responsible for themselves and others. This type of independence for a period of time can lead to a cultural clash when they arrive in America and are now treated like children until they graduate from high school and/or turn 18. In the state, they can remain in school through the year they turn age 21.

Latin American immigrants with limited education “come to the U.S. for manual labor opportunities with limited education, having left their countries to escape poverty” (McCarthy, 1998, p. 6-7). On the West Coast, there may be more influx of families going and back and forth between the states that border Mexico with the changing economy. However, in this geographical area of the United States, most of the shifting is unidirectional and among the neighboring communities, not between the home country and their new country. The majority of new immigrants have made many sacrifices to enter the United States, and most of them have little intention of leaving (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2009).

Cultural dissonance. Most schools recognize diversity through cultural celebrations often isolated from the curriculum or with flags in their hallway. Singleton and Linton claim that many educators do not have enough information or understanding about the history or oppression that students have experienced in their own lives or family history (Singleton & Linton, 2005). “Unconscious personal bias occurs, for example, when teachers have low expectations of black or Latino students” (Singleton et al., p. 267.) Many Latino ELLs come from prior experiences where academics were not

the priority in their community, and they come to our schools labeled as a student with informal education. One of the newer terms identifying ELLs who are newcomers with education gaps is SLIFE, students with limited or interrupted formal education (DeCapua & Marshall, 2010).

Many of our SLIFE students are from cultures that view the world in a practical way and often develop skills that are not necessarily focused on literacy and academic practices. Much of the learning comes from hands-on experiences and conversational engagement. This creates a cultural dissonance when they enter a typical American classroom “based on science and abstract reasoning and logic” (DeCapua et al., 2010, p. 163). Many American teachers expect SLIFE students to acculturate to the norms of the traditional classroom and follow the rules. To a new high school ELL, there “is little immediate relevance in this type of learning in the sense to which SLIFE are accustomed” (DeCapua et al., 2010, p. 164). This clash of cultures and misunderstanding can frustrate both the teachers and the students. Little time is spend discussing cultural dissonance or cultural relevance in the school district, as the initiatives are centered around curriculum and instruction as it connects to the assessments, not through an equity or cultural framework lens.

Policies and politics. For years, many districts were unable to determine the actual dropout rate because of the way school personnel document the students who exit the school district (Rumberger, 2011). The majority of students that stop attending school did not go through the withdrawal process, so the code to withdraw voluntarily (leave school) was rarely recorded (Neild & Balfanz, 2006). It was the norm in many school districts to assume that a student no longer attending the school had transferred to

another district or that an ELL had returned to their country of birth. The assumption that students had left out of the country equated to local and state reports having a small number of ELL or Latino dropouts, making the data look good when, in actuality, it was often inaccurate in several concerning ways (Orfield, 2004).

Prior to 2008, most school registrars coded Latino students who left school as students who were transferring out of country or out of state when in actuality the school had no documentation of the student leaving the school district, and the student rarely moved out of their residence, only their schools. “Determining which of these actually occurred may be difficult, particularly in situations where a systemic student-tracking system is not in place or has a limited scope, student populations are highly mobile, or the administrative offices responsible for tracking such students are overworked, understaffed, under-resourced, and have other pressing responsibilities” (Swanson, 2004, p. 36).

In 2007, several school districts in the state had 100% graduation rates for ESOL students. There was a discrepancy in capturing accurate data as the number of graduating twelfth graders was significantly lower than the number of entering ninth graders four years earlier. Following a national policy change, school staff could no longer code students as out of country transfers without having actual paperwork or documentation to support that claim. In 2008, the United States Department of Education required states to move toward a standardized cohort-based method for calculating graduation rates. This included documentation regarding the exit status of students. Data were no longer coded as subjectively, as it now was required to document and code a student as an “out of country” transfer, as if the student had left the United States to return to Latin America.

High school personnel are required to withdraw students when the student moves out of the defined school or district boundary or “decide[s] to terminate his or her education prior to graduation” (AUD Student Enrollment Guide, 2012). In order for a student to withdraw officially, the student’s family member who initially registered the student is the only person who may withdraw the exiting or exited student. As the family member appropriately withdraws the student, the registrar enters a code that provides the reason for leaving school. These codes can include transferring to another school within the county or another American school district, illness, transferring out of country, as well as other reasons.

Many district level leaders across the state did not recognize that Latino students/ELLs were not completing high school. This oversight was recognized when the new process revealed more accurate ELL drop out numbers. In AUD, the drop out data for ESOL students went from nearly zero to over 50% when the policy changed. Orfield had described the data that schools and states had on student dropouts full of flaws and even useless; he also said few resources had been committed to improving the data collection process (2004).

While the policy changed many data reports, it still does not capture all the “dropouts”. With much of the data being incomplete, school districts have been severely miscalculating the dropout rate for the fastest growing ethnic group in schools. In many urban districts, students are coded as “transferring out” of school, when in actuality they are exiting, dropping out, or being forced out of the school system for numerous and often unidentifiable reasons (Lukes, 2012).

There is room for improvement for recording and reviewing data about dropouts in the school district. The 2008-2011 cohort results for AUD captured the ELL dropout challenge; in the AUD, nearly 30% of Latino students in that cohort had left school before graduating. This percentage was almost twice the attrition rate of Latino students at the state level (State Report Card, 2012). These dropout numbers were significantly higher among all racial and ethnic groups, but for the purpose of this study, we will focus on Latino students.

Challenges to Legal Immigration

The Immigration Act of 1965. While many students come to the United States to reconnect with their parents, others leave their Central American country to seek better opportunity and connect with another family member or distant relative (Suárez-Orozco, 2011). The Immigration Act of 1965 was one of the policies that challenged Maria and her son, Chavo. Maria had a visa to come to the United States but was unable to obtain a visa for Chavo to accompany her. Upon arrival in the United States, Maria had to wait until she established permanent residency or citizenship before she could petition for Chavo to join her. The Preference System (USDHS, 2013; Immigration Act of 1990) lists the order in which family-sponsored visas are considered: 1) U.S. citizens' children who are single and under age 21; 2) permanent residents' spouses and children of any age who are single; 3) U.S. citizens' children who are married and/or age 21 or older; and 4) U.S. citizens' siblings (USDHS, 2013). "Spouses and minor children of U.S. citizens, as well as parents of adult U.S. citizens, are granted visas without regard to numerical quotas" (Hatch, 2010).

Maria applied as a permanent resident. Her application was one of hundreds of thousands. “Theoretically, if all required documents and fees are filed correctly with the application, the United States Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) can approve the visa petition within a few months. However, long processing delays are routine because of massive backlogs, insufficient staffing and administrative snafus” (Hatch, 2010). The delays can be as long as one or two decades.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement with minors. Many students come to the United States alone, en route to connect with a family member. Among the unaccompanied minors, some of them are reuniting with parents, who may or may not have documentation. Some unaccompanied minors are detained along their way. Without documentation, if they have a relative and a "justified" reason to stay in the U.S. and not be returned to their home country, then Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) releases the young person in transit to the custody of that relative (Department of Homeland Security, 2013). ICE provides them with a letter that indicates that the minor has been released in the care and custody of the said relative. The relative may be a parent or sibling; it may also be a distant relative who is willing to take responsibility for the “related” minor.

When families accept these children, Homeland Security/ICE requires them to enroll the children in school. At that time, the minor and the relative who is a resident living within the AUD boundaries often start the matriculation process, which begins at the Center for World Students (CWS). Prior to August 2013, the school policy required that kinship care and tuition waivers be completed. The policy stated that the school district should charge tuition, as the student had not yet established official custody with

parents/families they had reunited or guardianship with the extended family members with whom they were now living. According to a court liaison working for the county courts, the process of custody or guardianship can easily take over 120 days when all of the forms are accessible. Families often confuse custody (custodia in Spanish) and guardianship (not as easily translatable), which also creates a delay in the process (court liaison, personal communication, September 14, 2014). The court liaison explained that most families do not have easy access to the forms. If a family member cannot be located, a student is required to post a search for the person in the local paper for up to 90 days (2014).

Gaining guardianship through the legal system is not easily obtainable in the school system's requested timeframe as established by the current school policy. Additionally, guardianship is not always the appropriate direction as students are pursuing other legal pathways, such as seeking visas or other processes to citizenship. A push to guardianship may preclude them from other steps being taken with community lawyers in the case of abandonment, abuse, or neglect.

School System Policies

Children seeking refuge. Prior to this recent policy change, students had to go through the process of kinship care and tuition waivers, which created a delay in the AUD enrollment process. The students were not enrolled in school for several days or weeks due to the mixed messages they and their guardians received. Some of the policies had not been revised to address the new national policies on immigration. It led to a misunderstanding about how to interpret the ICE letter. When district staff followed policy, they asked the families to provide support for the ICE letter by seeking additional

documentation of hardship, as observed by families who came to the CWS with questions and concerns. “‘Informal kinship care’ means a living arrangement in which a relative of a child, who is not in the care, custody, or guardianship of the local department of social services, provides for the care and custody of the child due to a serious family hardship” (AUD policy, 2013.) The student then missed several days of school, widening the educational gap right at the beginning of his/her entry into a new school or a new school year in a new country, as they tried to get the school district’s required documentation.

Traditionally, proof of hardship is difficult for unaccompanied minors to obtain. In a verbal agreement earlier in the SY2013-14, the AUD leadership approved the ICE letter as an officially acceptable form of documentation to enroll the students for free, as a county resident. There were 174 cases in that school year that were handled by a combination of offices with varying levels of support while the policy was being revised. Some students had to find additional documentation and often were not enrolled or were withdrawn from school based on not receiving the requested documentation in the timeline set by the outdated policy. Students were missing instructional days, while the guardians were also missing several days of work traveling among the school, the courts, and several office in the school district located in several different geographical locations.

The federal government’s ICE letter grants these students entrance in the United States as a form of refuge as they were often victims of crime, abuse or neglect in their home country; some have been raped or orphaned. Getting documentation from one's country is not an easy or realistic process. In SY2012-13, one student was denied free enrollment despite having her parents’ death certificate. After clearing the tuition waiver process, the student was told to obtain guardianship with the extended family member

with whom she was now residing within 60 days. One of the counselors involved in the case brought the outdated procedures to the leadership team's attention, which led to a task force.

The legal concerns included the delay in enrollment, not accepting the ICE letter for guardianship, and the financial obligation to pay tuition. The policy stated that a review committee was responsible in the decision making process. All of the review committee members resided in one office that does not directly enroll or meet with the families. Students denied tuition then turned to the appeals office that overrode the decision with the help of the CWS. As a result of the increasing denials, the students were also impacting community legal services and the county legal system, which were seeking additional forms of support to help enroll the students into school.

Renewal of approval status. Students under 18 that successfully enroll in school receive a letter in the summer to renew their paperwork (AUD Policy 5118, 2010). Most of the annual renewal letters requesting families to update the documentation were still not being provided in Spanish as recently as the summer of 2014. After the letter is mailed, some of the students receive a call from the school registrar telling them that they have been withdrawn. Those who do not get a courtesy call arrive at school in August surprised that they are no longer enrolled as a student. These students often turn to the CWS to explain the process, as it is one of the offices with the most Spanish speakers in the school system (CWS, personal communication, 2014).

In August 2013, the leadership of CWS convened a discussion with the top leadership to prevent a potential lawsuit from local legal organizations concerned about enrollment challenges that unaccompanied minors faced (School Chief, personal

communication, August 13, 2013). A decision was made to classify all of these students as homeless as they met the criteria as defined by the state. According to the AUD website, a homeless student “lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence... Homeless children may be ‘doubled-up’ with relatives or friends due to a loss of housing, natural disaster, or economic hardship” (AUD Office for homeless students, 2013). As a result of the new registration status, over 200 students in SY2013-14 were registered upon arrival to the school system and their acceptance into school was not postponed due to the judicial process that takes up to several months. The number of incoming students in similar situations continued to increase and the seamless transition also continued.

Centering Research around Latino ELLs

Latino ELLs speak Spanish, but what else do the teachers and administrators know about the students? Unfortunately, too often, “we don’t know what we don’t know” when discussing the issues of race and culture, emphasizing the ignorance and self-claimed awareness on topics that are actually unfamiliar to us (Singleton et al., 2005).

In this study, the researcher collected data through surveys and focus groups from a purposeful sample of high school Latino ELLs in AUD. The purpose of this research was to identify the key factors, both quantitative and qualitative, that support high school Latino English Language Learners (ELLs) successful retention in school and the major external and internal challenges to increase the number of Latino ELL high school graduates. In addition, the study provided recommendations and considerations that can be implemented to increase the number of graduating Latino ELLs.

Research Questions

The four research questions that framed the study were:

1. What support factors do high school Latino ELLs identify with most on their graduation pathway?
2. What external and internal challenges do high school Latino ELLs face in obtaining a diploma?
3. How do the students' cultural expectations support or hinder their educational trajectory?
4. What are the Latino ELLs' expectations of their educational and career pathway?

Prior Attempts to Address the Problem

The Dream Act: Locally and nationally. Prior to the DREAM (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) Act passing in the state in 2012, students who were undocumented rarely considered going to college as they would be required to pay out of state or international tuition. The state's Dream Act may now provide help to the students and schools resulting in an increase in the graduation rate among Latino ELLs. The state's voters approved the DREAM in a vote of 58% over 42% supporting it on the 2012 ballot to allow undocumented residents who have attended high school for three years to attend in-state colleges or universities at the same tuition fee as any other state resident.

"The increased educational achievement for [state] students made possible by the Dream Act means a decreased likelihood they will fall into poverty and a greater likelihood they will own a home and raise better educated children, according to a study

by the Higher Education Access Alliance” (State Educators, 2013). The state’s Dream Act impacts about 4.6% of the state, the majority of whom reside in AUD and the neighboring large district who together house more than 75% of the state’s ELL population (Immigration Policy Center, 2013). The state’s Dream Act is an incentive for more students to graduate.

“Most of these unauthorized immigrants—especially those with children—are not going back to their countries of birth” (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2009, p. 333). While the act allows students to attend college at the in-state tuition price, there are still barriers. At this time, job opportunities are limited after college due to the current immigration laws and limitations making it questionable whether many Latino students will invest in a college education instead of seeking any type of work following high school.

Support from the Center for World Students (CWS). The CWS is located at the northeastern end of the geographically large school district. It is the educational entry point for the more than 34,000 AUD world students and where most Latino immigrant students register in the school system. This location continues to be accessible to the majority of immigrant students who reside in the most populated part of the district. However, for the students residing in other areas of the school district, the drive could be as far as 31 miles, preventing many students from registering in a timely way. Students who speak a language other than English at home, have attended school outside of the United States, and/or were born outside of the United States make an appointment at the CWS before being enrolled in AUD. During the appointment, ESOL testers determine the student’s English proficiency level using the WIDA-APT and place them in or out of

ESOL. The student and family also speak with a CWS counselor who explains ESOL, the American school system, and the process to register. During the intake process, international counselors also engage in conversation about prior schooling and educational history. Information, such as interrupted schooling or immigrant status, is often discussed in confidentiality. In SY2014-15, there were seven international counselors (all of whom speak another language, of which six are fluent in Spanish.) The CWS also has 2 bilingual (Spanish-English) front office support staff registering over 6,000 students annually. Two counselors and two testers service, test, and support as many as 25 students on most school days.

When an immigrant student arrives in the U.S. high school, there is often a clash of expectations. Many counselors place them on the traditional trajectory toward graduation; unfortunately, many principals assume they are only in school to learn enough English to acclimate and transition into work, especially if they are older than the average ninth grader. After leaving CWS, students report to their boundary school to complete the registration process. However, several students who are 17 years old or more leave CWS with their paperwork to enroll in the school and never register in their boundary school. Sometimes they call the CWS counselor and tell them that they were given phone numbers for adult education or discouraged from enrolling (CWS counselor, personal communication, May 2014). Lukes refers to these students as “shut outs” as they never get through the door and into the school (2012).

Most urban school districts with growing Latino student populations “struggle to find strategies to help these students become successful in the academic environment” (Center for Education Policy, 2007). They also fail to find ways to include them in the

social environment. In AUD, students have told CWS counselors that they feel that the schools don't understand who they are. They have given examples of how their dances don't play international music or how they hear the teachers or school leader group all of the Spanish-speaking students as one and not inquire about their individual nationality (CWS counselor, personal communication, May 2014.)

AUD and addressing the dropout rate. Both researchers and practitioners, locally and nationally, developed tools to identify the students that are most at risk of not graduating. According to Kennelly and Monrad, the four leading factors identifying who will not complete high school are: 1) low grades in the core areas, 2) poor attendance, 3) not being promoted to the next grade level, and 4) little classroom engagement (2007). AUD has identified five at-risk measures in eighth grade that are early warning signs for potentially dropping out: poor attendance, discipline issues, low scores on the REs in reading and math, and low grade point average (Whittington, 2013). These five measures often become predictive, and in SY2013-14 and SY2014-15, the AUD secondary leadership team required schools to look at these data and strategically support the ninth graders who were at risk.

While this monitoring tool identifies the majority of students, it fails to capture the new arrivals, such as the new immigrant students who are over 14 years of age and enter at the high school level. Based on the at-risk measures mentioned above, students are then coded one of three colors to determine if they are at risk of repeating grade 9: green (very low risk of retention); yellow (moderate risk of retention); and red (high risk of retention) (Whittington, 2013). The high school central office team prints out data each quarter and shares it with the principal and their leadership team. More than 20% of

grade 9 students in SY2012-13 repeated grade 9 the following school year; repeating ninth grade is one of the largest factors shared among students who do not complete high school.

In SY2013-14, each high school was asked to develop its own plan and explain how they were targeting each individual on the early warning indicator in the yellow or red category. Some teachers and administrators communicate directly with the students that they have been identified. The dialogue is intended to support the students and guide them by providing the necessary support and intervention, such as parent-teacher conferences or student work plans to pass the courses or change the behavior. In 2014-15, special education students were addressed and added to the quarterly conversation. Unfortunately, English language ability is not one of the factors identified as an indicator or flag. ESOL students taking ESOL English are not reviewed in the early warning indicator and not included in the discussion.

ESOL English course scheduling. As school leaders put a red flag on grade retention, AUD ELL leadership team revisited the policy of looping (repeating) ninth grade newcomers to provide them an additional year to learn English in spring 2014. Previously, high school newcomers who spoke little to no English were placed in several beginning level English courses which provided elective credits that prevented a student from being promoted to tenth grade, even upon successful completion (School Chief, personal communication, 2010). In SY2012-13, this practice was abolished as data and anecdotal feedback conveyed that this scheduling practice was not positively impacting the students who needed extra support to graduate. Instead, the lack of promotion to grade ten was contributing to the problem, as students were viewed as failures or saw

themselves as unsuccessful.

The newcomer English course was designed to provide the students the additional fifth year often necessary for the students who spoke little to no English. In the state, in order to be promoted, students must pass English and earn credits.

Given the dual pressures of this condensed time frame—of mastering such a body of information, while often attending less than optimal schools—the odds are stacked highly against new arrivals in their ability to achieve fairly on high-stakes tests in comparison to their native-born peers.

(Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2009, p. 329)

The newcomer English course, which was taught by ESOL teachers in 11 of the high schools with ESOL programs, deliberately looped them back into grade 9, in order to provide additional English support before placing them in credit bearing courses that were more challenging. This plan was created in 2010 to provide students with additional time necessary to master academic English and intentionally provide five years of high school: four years of ESOL English credit and one year of mainstream English before graduation. Unfortunately, this plan to support ninth grade newcomers may actually have contributed to drop outs.

Strategies to Address the Dropout Rate

Grants and taskforces at the district level. According to the AUD 2013 school district plan that the state requires of every school district each fall, AUD was focusing on reducing the gap between the highest and lowest performing subgroups in half by SY2019-20. The plan also stated that the school district recognized the need to “develop a pervasive college-going culture to support and encourage youth to thrive academically,

complete grade twelve and enroll and graduate from college” (AUD School District Plan, p. 6.) Additionally, a task force named the School Completion Taskforce had been established with members from secondary leadership team, curriculum, counseling, and other academic offices throughout the district.

The School Completion Taskforce first convened two years earlier, and a new position titled special projects coordinator was created in high school performance to support the focus on high school graduation. The taskforce goals were to: 1) establish a comprehensive approach to the school system’s completion efforts; 2) increase the graduation rate by 5% annually; 3) decrease the dropout rate by 5% annually; 4) increase the first time ninth grade promotion rate; and 5) enhance the transition process from elementary to middle and from middle to high school. This team met throughout the year with central office leaders from across the different disciplines. A year and a half later, the grade nine pass rate in the district was up 5.9% with two schools making double digit improvement (Anfenson-Comeau, 2015).

Two other taskforces identified in the AUD school district plan included the Career Assessment Taskforce (CAT) and the Dropout Prevention Taskforce (DPT). The CAT was working with online software to support students in grades 5, 8 and 10 as they look at different career fields. The DPT first met during the SY2010-11, and it was set to reconvene again in SY2013-14. The team was selected to look at dropout data and develop targets to support specific groups most at-risk. The DPT was to develop a comprehensive resource list, a process for high schools to develop a drop-out reduction plan, and a comprehensive plan to support ten school teams with the highest dropout rate. The school system also implemented and received federal grants to support two programs

that support high school students who would be the first in their family to attend college. However, none of these programs specifically targeted ELLs or Latino students in AUD, and few schools had any ELLs participating.

National Dropout Prevention Center/Network. The district joined the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network (NDPCN). AUD aligned its Key Performance Indicators with the 15 NDPCN effective strategies to reduce dropout rates. Through school-community collaboration, schools work with the neighborhood-partnership office to connect the students to the local businesses. Funding supported one person in this position to help businesses bring resources into the schools. Another strategy was through the Positive Behavior Incentives and Supports (PBIS), which were implemented in 105 schools. Implementing PBIS is an approach for school staff “to encourage a positive school culture and prevent problem behavior” (school district plan, p. 11). Support included site visits, quarterly visits, informal evaluations, data collection, and staff training. In these plans, there was little mention of ELLs or cultural proficiency.

Alternative schooling. AUD has four alternative high schools, as well as evening high school, a school at the juvenile detention center, two vocational schools, and a credit-recovery school. The credit recovery school served up to 150 students who were recent dropouts that are less than 10 credits away from graduating. At this time, no accommodations were available to support ELLs, aside from resources provided to the incarcerated youth program. In SY2014-15, the ESOL office received funding for five itinerant teachers to service any students placed at these locations. In June 2014, AUD, in collaboration with a non-profit organization supporting school development for ESOL students and a pro-immigration organization, received a national grant from a top

education foundation to open two new ESOL specialty schools in Fall 2015. The new International High Schools opened in August 2015, each with an inaugural class of 100 students, 99% ELLs and 1% R-ELLs.

Latino leadership in the school district. The school district has recognized the challenges and is deliberately finding ways to increase the graduation rate and decrease the drop out rate. The local newspaper stated, “The dropout rate for Hispanic students in AUD is over 25%, but school officials say they hope that hiring more Hispanic staff will help reduce that number” (Anfenson-Comeau, 2014a).

In fall 2012, the superintendent/CEO hired the first officer of diversity for Latino affairs. Her focus includes supporting Latino parents, increasing the number of Latino teachers and staff, and developing training opportunities for both parents and staff in collaboration with other programs in the district. In the local paper, the new officer stated that increasing the Latino student graduation rate is one of her priorities. The position was praised after a few local leaders and community organizations voiced concerns about not having any Latino representation on the reconstituted school board or top leadership who are Latino in a school system with more than 24% Latino/Hispanic students of the over 100,000 students (Wiggins, 2013a). In Fall 2013, both AUD and the local government established Latino task forces to provide advocacy support to the growing Latino population. The AUD Latino task force includes leadership from the two groups, local politicians, and school/community leaders coming together for monthly dialogues (School officer, personal communication, December 13, 2013). In November 2014, two Latinas won school board seats in the county elections (Anfenson-Comeau, 2014b).

Career pathways. In an attempt to reconstruct the current high school model and increase the graduation rate of college and career ready students, the office of career pathways was created. The office's purpose is to develop and implement programs and "student opportunities that support their readiness for successful entry into a college and/or a career. The goal is to transform the educational experience of (AUD) middle and high school students ensuring that 100% of our graduates are college and workforce ready and competitive in the 21st century economy" (AUD's office of career pathways, 2013).

The plan is to create five networks based on geographical location and provide access to each pathway in every network by 2017, providing an equitable opportunity for every student in the district to participate beyond their school's few options. This idea has yet solidified. If implemented, it would provide every high school student in the district an opportunity to apply and participate in any of the pathways, as each network would offer every pathway. Additional funding has supported the growing office of career pathways, and it is increasing each year as part of a five-year implementation plan including central office staff and teachers (AUD career pathways FAQ, 2013; AUD Approved Budget, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014.) The office has created five networks among the 20 plus traditional high schools in our system with the goal of providing one of every 13 pathways in every network.

Three of the high schools, two of which have growing Latino populations, created "wall-to-wall academies" effective for all incoming ninth graders in SY2012-13. The career pathway officer describes wall-to-wall academies as schools that schedule all of their students in an academy. However, the term "all" has not included English

Language Learners, of which more than 80% are Latino. Only 72 of the 1,123 (6%) ESOL high school students were enrolled in a pathway; and 439 of the 2,293 (16%) Latino students were enrolled in a pathway (Levinger, 2013).

Potential Solutions

Immigrating Latino students are not going to decrease any time soon, since Central America is continuing to experience political and economic instability. As the number of incoming students continues to arrive steadily, AUD will be faced with an expanding number of students without a strong grasp of English or literacy skills. In addition to new language and new content areas, these new students have to deal with new friends, different dress codes, and unfamiliar social acceptance skills. Though these challenges do not seem significant, to a developing teenager, they create enormous obstacles in their educational success. School leaders, teachers, and staff need to know more about this growing population who is willing to risk their lives in pursuit of the American Dream.

In addition, the school, the county, the state, and the federal government have established policies that are often counter-productive to measuring or increasing student success rates. The state passed the DREAM Act—an important show of support, but the state must now provide additional funds and personnel to follow through on this significant achievement. Step by step, systematic procedures must be put in place to augment this new policy. Until immigration reform is passed at the national level, students have limited access to obtaining the American Dream. While those who are undocumented may be able to go further in their education, they and/or their family

members are at risk of deportation at any given time; they are also limited in the professional opportunities beyond school without documentation.

The traditional American Dream to graduate high school, go to college, and have a job with a living wage is not always a feasible pathway for new immigrant Latino high school students. Other policies such as high school exit exams and ESOL course sequences also impact the pathway to college and career readiness. While national laws keep the doors open to education for all to enter, the road to enter the door and the labyrinth within the schools complicate the multifaceted process and often add to the low Latino ELL graduation statistics. We also need to use the gathered data to educate us in creating and adopting better policies locally, statewide, and nationally to support all of our students in the school district.

Section 2: Methodology

This section describes the purpose of the study, including the research questions, design and methods, participants, data collection, and proposed analyses.

Rationale of the Study

As the Latino ELL population grows and the data reveal the gaps, educators must understand our students as only two out of three Latino ELLs in AUD graduate from high school. The district staff reviews high school data regularly and interfaces with counselors when questions arise. What are missing from the data are the voices of the students. By conducting a mixed-methods study using both survey and focus group data, the researcher investigated the supports, attitudes, and challenges of Latino high school ELLs about reunification, prior schooling, current supports, challenges, family, financial obligations, cultural perspective about school, and future aspirations. The researcher surveyed more than 159 ELLs and analyzed the findings. All of the questionnaires were in Spanish and English for current high school Latino ELLs; the focus groups were conducted in both English and Spanish with current high school Latino ELLs who were a mixed level of ESOL students. These methods allowed the data to be captured through the students' own words and perceptions, not the researcher's view or choice of jargon.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to pinpoint the factors that students identify as their support in school, as well as their challenges, in order to increase the number of Latino ELL high school graduates. The study's purpose was to examine how age of arrival, years of prior schooling, and reunification relate to students' self-reported responses in

order to understand the challenges and identify supportive influences/factors/issues in the high school learning process. In order to collect these data, two assistants and an interpreter surveyed high school Latino ELLs in mixed levels of ESOL classes. Then, the researcher and interpreter conducted focus groups two weeks after the surveys with some of the same high school Latino ELLs who took the survey. These students discussed the survey topics more in depth.

Survey. The survey (see Appendix A) asked Latino ELLs questions about their prior educational experiences and expectations in the school district. The series of both quantitative and qualitative questions focused primarily on the factors that support students as well as different challenges hindering the pathway to completing high school in the United States: teacher and parental support, academics, self-confidence, cultural perspective, expectations, family obligation attitudes, and prior education/experiences. One section included short responses, which asked about the students' future aspirations.

Surveys were an appropriate tool for this study as it captured information about students that could be compared and analyzed to help the district staff better support Latino ELLs. Because the surveys were done confidentially, no student was at risk for sharing their opinions or experiences. The researcher's goal was to conduct at least 50 surveys at each school during two visits to each school, totaling six visits.

Focus groups. In each focus group, the researcher and the bilingual interpreter facilitated the conversation in both English and Spanish. The three focus groups were during the school day at each of the schools where the researcher conducted the surveys. Most of the three focus groups consisted of students who had been in the school district for at least two years and were in the advanced level of ESOL.

Research Questions

The research questions in this study addressed the following:

1. What support factors do high school Latino ELLs identify with most on their graduation pathway?
2. What internal and external challenges do high school Latino ELLs face in obtaining a diploma?
3. How do the students' cultural expectations support or hinder their educational trajectory?
4. What are the Latino ELLs' expectations of their own educational and career pathway?

Design and Methods

Student surveys. In this mixed-methods study, more than 159 high school Latino ELLs completed the surveys during their ESOL classes. The researcher collected data from students at three purposefully selected schools with significant ESOL populations: two high schools with 600-900 ELLs and one high school with more than 150 ELLs.

The researcher emailed and spoke in person to the three principals to inform them about the research (see Appendix F) to seek their permission, sign the consent to participate, and be able to contact their ESOL teachers to set up both survey times and focus groups. Next, the researcher contacted the ESOL teachers at the schools via email to explain the study and request a response from teachers who were willing to participate (Appendix G). The letter explained that participation included hosting the researcher's two assistants to issue the survey and coordinating the focus groups with the researcher.

Then, the researcher provided each participating teacher with copies of the research letter and consent/assent forms, as printing is resourcefully challenging. Teachers distributed the forms in both English and Spanish to the students: the consent and assent forms for students, the consent forms for parents, and the research letter (Appendices H & I). Students who were under 18 years of age completed the assent forms, and students who were 18 years of age or more completed the consent forms. The forms were distributed at least one week in advance.

The teacher collected the signed forms and notified the researcher via email, and the researcher scheduled a time for the researcher's assistants and the interpreter to come to the class and administer the online survey with the students who agreed to participate. Upon collection of the forms and after scheduling the best time for the teachers, the assistants met in the ESOL classroom or the media center, whichever had a computer or tablet available for every student to use. The team helped the students to access the survey using Qualtrics, a secure web based survey instrument. The survey link was provided to the students as they logged in.

Most students took the survey in English or Spanish on a computer at school. The teacher and the researcher originally coordinated the location, so every eligible student would have a computer. Some classrooms had their own computers, and other schools had mobile laptops that could be checked out. When necessary due to technical difficulties, the students completed the survey on their cell phone or with a paper copy. The researcher entered the paper copy data into Qualtrics.

The researcher's assistants and the interpreter read the script to students (Appendices B and C). The script explained the purpose of the study and indicated that

the 32-question survey would take about 20 minutes to complete. It provided one sample question and example of a response. The script, as well as any other directions and questions, was provided in both Spanish and English. The researcher's assistants were present to assist with any questions. Students that participated were entered in a drawing for \$25 gift certificates, which the researcher provided to three winners; each school had one winner.

Student focus groups. This second part of the study was comprised of student focus groups. The researcher and a bilingual interpreter led the three focus groups in English and Spanish. These were the same schools and the same students who took the survey. The researcher and the researcher's assistants worked with teachers who participated in the survey to purposefully select a group of students who wanted to participate in the focus groups. The ESOL teacher and ESOL paraprofessional at the schools identified a space to use for the dialogue. Additionally, the researcher provided breakfast or snacks to the student participants.

The researcher typed the participants' comments as the audio recording failed. As every response was in both English and Spanish, the researcher was able to apply her quick scripting skills to capture all of the English dialogue while the interpreter spoke in Spanish. The researcher examined these discussions in order to identify categories and patterns for analysis (Creswell et al., 2007). The researcher analyzed the collective responses by reporting the frequency of concepts and words. Other educators engaged in work with ELLs reviewed the responses and identified the themes. From the responses and suggested themes, the researcher developed brief descriptions of the recurring themes.

Participants

The researcher sent e-mails to ESOL teachers at the three purposefully selected high schools to get their support and set up times to survey their ESOL students. She informed all of them about her survey and explained how the school district and university were supporting this research. She asked them when the assistants could survey their students using the online tool, Qualtrics. Participation was voluntary, and teachers who did not want to participate were told that they would not be penalized or scrutinized. ELLs whose first language was Spanish and were currently ESOL high school students in AUD were to be the participants in the survey. The students ranged between grades 9 and 12 and were of all levels of ESOL: beginning, intermediate, or advanced. The researcher provided a letter in both Spanish and English describing the survey and focus groups to all the participating students (See Appendices I, J, K, L, and M), and students were able to withdraw or decline at any time during the survey.

The researcher asked the ESOL teacher to divide the class into two groups if there were students who did not bring the consent form or chose not to participate in the 20-minute survey. One group stayed with the teacher while the other group who brought back their consent/assent forms joined the research team. All student participation was voluntary. The researcher collected 57 completed surveys at Large School A, 54 at Large School B, and 60 at Small School C in order to get a valid sample of students.

Following the survey, the researcher collaborated with ESOL teachers and/or the ESOL paraprofessional who participated in the survey process at each of the three schools in order to make a purposeful selection for the focus groups of high school students. The student participants met the following criteria: a) be a current high school

ESOL student in our school district, b) be a native Spanish speaker, c) participate in the survey, and d) have the completed consent forms or the assent forms for themselves and the parental consent forms, if applicable.

The researcher and a bilingual interpreter conducted the three focus groups at each of the participating high schools. One ESOL teacher at each of the participating schools coordinated with the researcher to schedule the focus groups. The researcher requested between 10 and 12 students who had completed the survey to participate at each school. A total of 37 students participated in focus groups. The total included 10 students from School A, 14 from School B, and 13 from School C.

The teachers provided between 40 and 90 minutes for each of the focus groups. Each focus group was conducted in both Spanish and English. In School A, the teacher hosted the focus group during their ESOL English class for 60 minutes, School B allotted 40 minutes, and School C allotted 90 minutes.

Instrument Design

Surveys. The interview protocol and survey were provided in both Spanish and English. The online 32-question survey was selected response with five short responses. The “Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study” (Portes & Rumbaut, 2005) and the work of Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco (1995) inspired and influenced the researcher in the development of several questions. The questions considered the following factors: 1) value of education; 2) expectations in achieving their long-term goals; 3) current level of education; 4) expectations before coming to the United States; 5) family obligations; and 6) future aspirations. Students who chose to participate completed the survey in English and/or Spanish.

Focus groups. The researcher read the script at the beginning of each focus group (Appendix D). The interpreter read the Spanish translation (Appendix E). They then proceeded to ask questions from the survey instrument. The interviewer and interpreter asked a set of 12 questions (see Appendix D and E) about family separation and reunification, education prior to coming to the school district, educational challenges, educational successes, current challenges, supports, and goals. The intent was to create an atmosphere in which participants could share their experiences and provide more in-depth answers through a semi-structured approach. It also provided additional insight and allowed the researcher to probe deeper following the surveys.

Pilot Study

Prior to conducting the survey of high school ELL students, the researcher distributed the survey to an English class at high school with a large ELL population that was not participating in the survey. That class consisted of students who were ELL advanced level students the previous year. The researcher discussed the questions and asked the students if there was need for any clarification. She then took their feedback to make changes in the wording and ordering of the questions.

Data Collection Procedures

Survey. The interested teachers who agreed to participate explained the research study to their classes and distributed the packet that included the detailed one-page introductory letter and consent/assent forms. The researcher provided each teacher with a class set plus additional copies to distribute to the students and parents. The teachers collected consent forms from parents and students, and then they notified the researcher via email. Together, the researcher and teacher scheduled a time for her assistants and

interpreter to come to the class and administer the online survey with the students who agreed to participate. The researcher worked with one to two staff members at each school. The assistants visited each school twice during a one-week window.

Most students took the survey in English and/or Spanish on a computer at school. The teacher and the researcher coordinated the location, so every eligible student would be able to access a computer. Some classrooms had their own computers, and other schools had mobile laptops that could be checked out. The survey was also administered in the library where multiple computers are accessible for students. A few students completed it on their cellular phone or by pencil and paper when the computers were not accessible.

The researcher's assistants and the interpreter read the script, which explained the purpose of the study and indicated that the survey would take about 20 minutes to complete. They also explained how to log on to the survey. They walked the students through one sample question and an example of a response. The script, as well as any other directions and questions, were provided in both Spanish and English.

Focus groups. The researchers and the interpreter conducted the focus groups within two weeks of the completed surveys. The researcher coordinated with the same team of teachers who participated in the survey. The ESOL teacher and/or paraprofessional identified the space and the selected students. Space included the library or a classroom. The focus groups ranged between 40 and 90 minutes. The allocated time to meet with students determined the number of questions asked. The scripted questions included an introduction and protocol of a focus group. The researcher purchased and provided breakfast or light refreshments at two of the three schools; one

school had just implemented a no food policy, so their participants did not receive any consumables.

During each focus group, participants engaged in dialogue in both Spanish and English as they responded to the questions (Appendix D and E). These questions were asked in English and Spanish. The researcher and interpreter followed a script and the pre-designed interview questions. The number of questions asked depended on the time the teacher allotted to the researcher and interpreter, as well as the time taken for some of the responses. The researcher and interpreter encouraged the students to participate openly and honestly with the group and the researchers.

Data Analysis

The researcher tabulated the survey results through Qualtrics and by using an analysis plan. Although the survey was distributed to all ELLs that the teacher included, only the surveys from students who spoke Spanish were analyzed. The researcher read through the open-ended responses and the data collected during the focus groups multiple times. The English transcription was cross analyzed with the surveys. Correlation and causation between variables were applied through descriptive analysis. She identified the themes and created categories. Multiple categories were assigned and used to further examine data collected from selected responses.

Subjectivity of the Researcher

When this researcher was a high school ESOL teacher over a decade earlier, she experienced first hand the high number of ESOL Latino students who were not completing high school. The number alarmed her, and the school registrar told her that they code them as students who are transferring out of the country. However, they

weren't leaving to their home country. Years later, as an administrator, she was surprised again in a state level meeting when the ESOL graduation rate was 100%. She then realized why the district and other state leaders did not recognize the high number of students leaving school, as most schools in the state and across the nation were coding them as out of country transfers and not as drop outs.

When the cohort tracking rules changed in 2009, the district began to have conversations about the graduation rates and drop out rates of ELLs. This information never left her mind, and she seized this opportunity through her dissertation to explore an issue that has been in her heart for many years. It is with much passion and curiosity that she delved into this topic.

Analysis, Validation and Ethical Considerations

The researcher identified and coded the common themes following the surveys and the focus groups. Additionally, she focused on questions about the students' prior education, current education, educational challenges, attitudes about school, family obligations, and their future dreams/plans about education and/or jobs. All teacher and student participation was voluntary. They were able to withdraw from the dialogue or interviews at any time. The study was ethically appropriate. The AUD IRB team and the UMD IRB team approved the research.

Section 3: Results, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this research study was to identify the key factors, both qualitative and quantitative, that support high school Latino ELLs successful retention and to recognize and address the major external and internal challenges that prevent the Latino ELL high school student from graduating. In addition, the study provides recommendations that can be implemented and considerations that can be applied to increase the number of graduating Latino ELLs.

The four research questions that framed the study were:

1. What support factors do high school Latino ELLs identify with most on their graduation pathway?
2. What external and internal challenges do high school Latino ELLs face in obtaining a diploma?
3. How do the students' cultural expectations support or hinder their educational trajectory?
4. What are the Latino ELLs' expectations of their educational and career pathway?

This chapter includes the findings from the mixed methods research: student surveys and student focus groups. This study examines the Latino high school ELLs' perspectives about the support they have as they adjust to American high school and their attitude about school and graduation. The study attempts to learn more about the students by asking them about their personal journeys and the tribulations that influenced and impacted their high school learning experience and hopefully their eventual success in school and a career.

This chapter is organized into five sections. The first section provides a brief overview of the methodology and targeted population of the sample that participated in both the survey and the focus groups. The second section contains findings to the research questions based on the *ELL Student Survey* and *ELL Focus Groups*. This survey provides quantitative and qualitative responses, including information about the students' goals. Included in the second section are also select transcriptions from both the surveys and the focus groups. The information garnered from these interactive focus groups captures the student dialogue from the three student focus groups at each high school. The third section includes summary, conclusions, and recommendations for educators. The fourth section includes the limitations and delimitations of the study. The fifth and final section is suggested future studies.

ELL Student Survey Results

The researcher distributed packets of introductory letters and consent/assent forms ($n = 275$) to participating staff at the three high school: 100 at Large School A, 100 at Large School B, and 75 at Small School C. The teachers distributed and collected the forms, and then they coordinated the survey dates with the research team. A total of 171 students took the survey at the three schools: 57 at Large School A, 54 at Large School B, and 60 at Small School C (see Table 7). All but 16 students completed the survey online. The others completed the survey on paper due to login challenges when attempting to use the school's computers. The researcher entered the paper responses from those 16 surveys into Qualtrics. Twelve surveys completed by students on the computer were subsequently eliminated from the analysis: six were eliminated because Spanish was not the students' first language and six more were eliminated as the Qualtrics program

deemed the surveys as incomplete. This resulted in a total of 159 usable surveys, a 57.8% return rate. Table 7 presents the response rate.

Table 7

Survey Response Rate by School

School	Surveys Distributed	Students Surveyed	Students Qualified	Percentage Returned
AUD Large School A	100	57	53	53%
AUD Large School B	100	54	49	49%
AUD Small School C	75	60	57	76%
	<i>N</i> = 275	<i>N</i> = 171	<i>N</i> = 159	57.8%

Among those responding, 50% ($n = 78$) were male, and 50% ($n = 78$) were female. Students responding to the survey were in all four grades of high school, 9-12 (see Table 8).

Table 8

Student Participants by Grade Level

Grade	<i>N</i>	Percent of Sample
9	20	13.5
10	76	48.0
11	49	31.0
12	12	7.5
Total	157	100%

The students ranged between ages 14 through 20 years of age: 14 years ($n = 2$, 1%), 15 years ($n = 20$, 13%), 16 years ($n = 28$, 18%), 17 years ($n = 32$, 20%), 18 years ($n = 49$, 31%), 19 years ($n = 21$, 13%), and 20 years ($n = 5$, 3%). More than 47% ($n = 75$) of

surveyed students are between 18 and 20 years old; 7% ($n = 11$) are in grade 12 and 32% ($n = 51$) are in grade 11 (see Table 9). The average student in grade 11 and 12 is between 16 and 18 years of age; many of the ELLs are older than the average student age. Two students did not respond to this question.

Table 9

Ages and Grades of Students

Grade	Students' Ages $N = 157$						
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
9	2	10	2	3	2	1	0
10	0	10	21	15	18	8	3
11	0	0	5	13	23	9	1
12	0	0	0	1	6	3	1
Total	2	20	28	32	49	21	5

The students were born in eight different countries: Dominican Republic ($n = 3$, 1.8%); Equatorial Guinea ($n = 1$, 0.7%); El Salvador ($n = 114$, 72%); Guatemala ($n = 20$, 12.6%); Honduras ($n = 17$, 10%); Peru ($n = 1$, .7%); Spain ($n = 1$, 0.7%); and the United States ($n = 1$, 0.7%). Two students did not respond.

Nine students (6%) were in ESOL Level 1 (Beginning), 104 (65%) were in ESOL 2 (Intermediate), and 46 (29%) were in ESOL Level 3 (Advanced). All directions and survey questions were provided in both English and Spanish.

ELL Focus Groups

The researcher and a bilingual interpreter conducted the three focus groups at each of the participating high schools. One ESOL teacher at each of the participating schools coordinated with the researcher to schedule the focus groups. The researcher

requested between 10 and 12 students who had completed the survey to participate at each school. A total of 37 students participated in focus groups (see Figure 1). The total included 10 students from School A, 14 from School B, and 13 from School C. Table 10 presents the demographics of these students.

Table 10

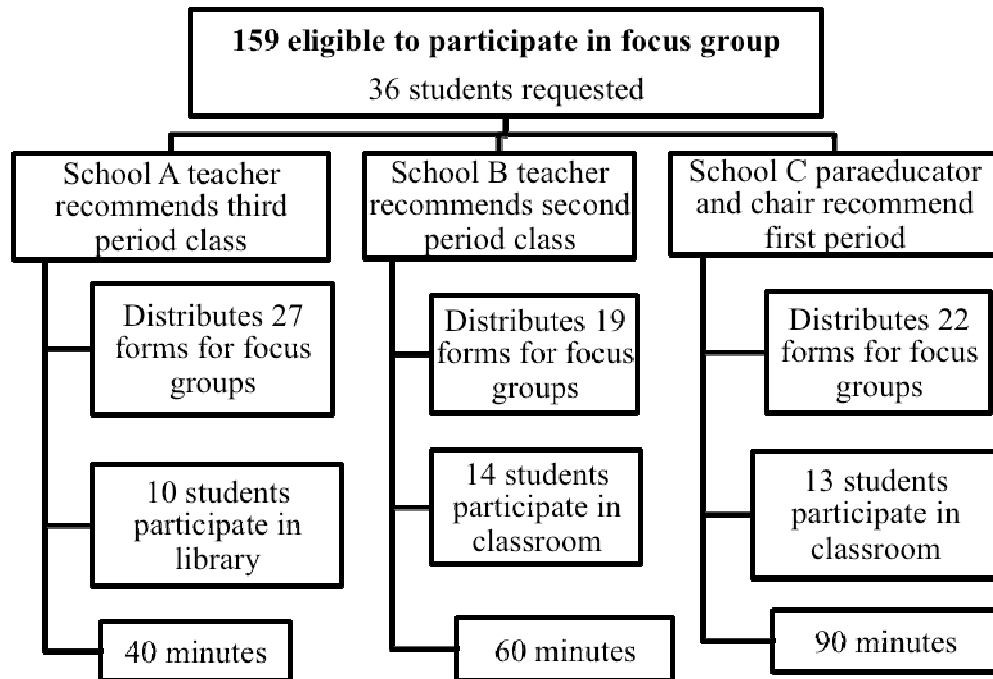
Number of Focus Group Participants by Grade and Country of Origin

Country of Origin	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
El Salvador	4	12	4	2
Guatemala		3	5	
Honduras		5	2	

Note. $N = 37$.

The teachers provided between 40 and 90 minutes for each of the focus groups. Each focus group was conducted in both Spanish and English. The researcher and interpreter followed a script. The number of questions asked depended on the time the teacher allotted to the researcher and interpreter, as well as the time taken for some of the responses. In School A, the teacher hosted the focus group during their ESOL English class for 60 minutes, School B allotted 40 minutes, and School C allotted 90 minutes (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 Recruitment of Focus Group Participants at Each School



The responses from the three focus groups were combined in the findings.

Following are the results for each of the research questions.

Research Question 1: What support factors do high school Latino ELLs identify with most on their graduation pathway?

The first research question explored the support factors high school Latino ELLs identified most on their pathway to graduation. Seven survey questions and four focus group questions addressed these support factors. The supports were broadly categorized into family, friend, and school supports. In the following subsections, the survey responses are reported followed by the focus group responses that pertained to each of the two categories of supports.

Family/friends survey results. Survey questions 7, 8, and 29 addressed items pertaining to family and friend supports. These were: 7) *When I am at home, I talk to*

_____ about school; 8) *When I need help with my homework, _____ helps me*; and 29)

When I have a problem, I talk to _____. Tables 11, 12, and 13 present the results of these survey questions.

When I am at home, I talk to _____ about school. About two thirds of the students ($n = 97$, 61%) said they talk to their parents or guardians about school and one third of the students ($n = 52$, 33%) talk to their siblings. Additionally, 15% ($n = 24$) of students talk to friends; 13% ($n = 21$) talk to a boyfriend/girlfriend; 10% ($n = 16$) talk to no one; and 4% ($n = 6$) talk to others (see Table 11).

Table 11

*Percentage of Students Talking about School with Different Family Members or Friends**

Subgroup	<i>N</i>	Percentage
Parents or Guardians	97	61%
Siblings (brothers or sisters)	52	33%
Friends	37	23%
Other Family Members	24	15%
Nobody	16	10%
Boyfriend or Girlfriend	21	13%
Other	6	4%

Notes. *Respondents could select more than one option. $N = 156$.

When I need help with my homework, _____ helps me. Students' responses about homework differed from whom they talk to about school (see Table 12). Only 4% ($n = 6$) said they talk to other family members about homework. The two groups that students indicated that they asked to help with homework were friends ($n = 43$, 27.5%) and nobody ($n = 39$, 25%).

Table 12

Percentage of Students Seeking Support for Homework from Different Family Members or Friends

Support Group Chosen	<i>N</i>	Percentage
Parents or Guardians	26	17.0%
Siblings (brothers or sisters)	25	6.0%
Friends	43	7.5%
Other Family Members	6	0%
Nobody	39	25.0%
Boyfriend or Girlfriend	12	8.0%
Other	5	2.5%

Note. *N* = 156.

Who students talk to about a problem. According to the survey responses, when students have a problem, they most frequently ask their friends or family before talking to school staff. Following external supports, students turn to teachers, followed by counselors, and lastly, “school leaders,” the assistant principal or principal (see Table 13.) This question had an open-response item. A total of eight students provided short responses, which included the principal, siblings, grandparents, “only with my best friend that I really know,” boyfriend/girlfriend, and no one.

Table 13

Frequency of Students Talking about Problems with Different Groups

	Never	Sometimes	Always	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
My Teachers	19 (14%)	72 (55%)	41 (31%)	132	1.83	.66
My Counselors	25 (19%)	59 (45%)	47 (36%)	131	1.83	.72
My School Leaders	37 (30%)	56 (46%)	29 (24%)	122	2.07	.74
My Friends	9 (7%)	56 (44%)	63 (49%)	128	1.58	.62
My Family	8 (6%)	30 (22%)	96 (72%)	134	1.34	.59
Others	17 (41%)	9 (22%)	15 (37%)	41	N/A	N/A

Focus group results. Family support was also a major theme in the focus groups. Responses related to this theme were in question 8) *Whom do you live with now? How do they support you or not support you?*

Whom do you live with now? How do they support you or not support you?

About half of the students in each group talked about the value of their parents' support and the words of encouragement they offered. Students talked about their family at home and whether or not the family supports them going to school. The students' responses included living with their parents; one biological parent and a step-father/mother; siblings; and an aunt or uncle. Some of the students said that their parents help them by making sure they do their homework and that they don't skip school. A student who lives with her mother said, "My mom is confident in what I can do. She believes in me and it gives me more confidence." Another student said her uncle also gives her confidence and support. Because of that, she believes she can pursue her dreams and take advantage of the opportunities here in the United States.

Another student said that her parents support her. "They ask me how I'm doing. They make me go over what I studied and they want the best for me." A male student said that because of his mom's encouragement, he and his brother are still in school. "I live with my mom and stepdad. My brother and I are the oldest. We want to drop out of school and work full-time, but my mom says no. She tells us, 'Stay in school, or else you'll be doing the same thing with the same job always.' I see people at the same job like fast food or stores and they never get promoted." She also tells him that he has to stay in school so he can get better jobs when he graduates.

However, other students who lived with their family talked about a lack of support (see Table 14). “My family is not helping [me], as they don’t care if I go to school or not,” said the student. Another student who lives with her mother, stepfather, and three siblings said, “My mom doesn’t always support me because she puts a lot of time into the other kids. She tells me to just stay at school. If I have a problem, then I don’t tell her.” The student started to cry. Another student who lives with her mom and stepfather said she doesn’t know if her mom really cares about how she does in school. She talked about her mom, “She never asks me about my homework or what I’m doing. She just works.”

Table 14

Selected Survey Responses on Family Supports or Non-Support

Support	Non-Support
Makes sure I do my homework	Doesn’t care whether I go to school or not
Supports what and how I’m doing	Too busy with my younger step-siblings
Wants the best for me	Doesn’t know if mom really cares
Tells me to go to school	Never asks me about homework/school
Keeps me from dropping out	No support of my academics
Gives me confidence	

Student/teacher/school support survey results. Survey questions 12, 13, 27, 29, and 30 asked about school-level supports including teachers, staff, and other students. These were: 12) *Young people in my neighborhood ____*; 13) *My best friends here ____*; 27) *When I think about my teachers, I think that ____ (Likert scale responses)*; 29) *When I have a problem, I talk to ____*; and 30) *Please click on the groups of people and put (drop and drag) them under the column that best describes who you can ask for help or*

support when you need it. Tables 15, 16, and 17 present the results of these survey questions.

Young people in my neighborhood and my friends, _____. Students described what young people in their neighborhood and what their friends do. Many of the numbers vary by single digits when neighbors and friends are compared to one another, such as going to school for neighbors ($n = 136$, 89%) compared to friends ($n = 140$, 95%) or having a job for neighbors ($n = 83$, 58%) compared to friends ($n = 85$, 63%). The difference in responses was evident in the question about who is in a gang: 21% of neighbors ($n = 30$) compared to 2% of friends ($n = 3$). Another difference in responses was in who dropped out of school: 28% of neighbors ($n = 40$) compared to 13% of friends ($n = 17$). Another insightful response was the question about going to college or planning to go to college. Only 68% of neighbors ($n = 97$) compared to 83% of friends ($n = 113$) were college-bound. The responses reflected responsible choices in friends (see Table 15).

More students reported that young people in their neighborhood ($n = 96$, 68%) and friends ($n = 100$, 74%) participated in clubs and sports. They also identified that the young people in their neighborhood ($n = 64$, 45%) have slightly less responsibilities at home in comparison to their friends ($n = 71$, 52%). More students reported that young people in their neighborhood ($n = 98$, 68%) and friends ($n = 84$, 62%) had a lot of time to play or hang out.

Table 15*Characteristics of Respondents' Age-Peer Neighbors and Friends*

Characteristic	Neighbors	<i>N</i>	Friends	<i>N</i>
Go to school	136 (89%)	152	140 (95%)	147
Have a job	83 (58%)	142	85 (63%)	134
Are in a gang	30 (27%)	138	3 (2%)	128
Dropped out of school	40 (28%)	142	17 (13%)	132
Participate in clubs or sports	96 (68%)	141	100 (74%)	135
Have lots of responsibilities at home	64 (45%)	143	71 (52%)	136
Have a lot of time to play or hang out	98 (68%)	144	84 (62%)	136
Go to college or plan to go	97 (68%)	142	113 (83%)	136

When I think about my teachers. According to the survey, the large majority of students “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that their teachers help them, encourage them, and know them. They also said that they learn a lot, and the teachers from ESOL, math, science, history, and English help them understand. More students selected “agree” rather than “strongly agree” in talking to teachers about problems and about teachers talking to them about college (see Table 16).

Table 16*Student Perspectives of Teachers*

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N	M	SD
My teachers help me	0 (0%)	5 (3%)	40 (27%)	102 (69%)	147	1.34	.54
My teachers encourage me to try	0 (0%)	6 (4%)	42 (30%)	92 (66%)	140	1.39	.57
My teachers know me	2 (1%)	14 (10%)	67 (48%)	58 (41%)	141	1.72	.70
I learn a lot from my teachers	1 (1%)	2 (1%)	46 (33%)	92 (65%)	141	1.38	.55
My ESOL and history teachers help me understand	4 (2%)	5 (4%)	42 (30%)	90 (64%)	141	1.45	.70
My teachers talk about college	4 (2%)	15 (11%)	58 (41%)	63 (45%)	140	1.71	.77
I can talk to my teachers when there is a problem	10 (7%)	17 (12%)	54 (39%)	59 (42%)	140	1.84	.90
My math and science teachers help me understand	2 (1%)	10 (7%)	46 (32%)	84 (59%)	142	1.51	.69
My teachers treat me fairly	4 (2%)	8 (6%)	54 (39%)	73 (53%)	139	1.59	.73

Please click on the groups of people and put (drop and drag) them under the column that best describes who you can ask for help or support when you need it.

Students ($n = 111$) ranked which school staff member they can ask for help or support

when needed. The responses included “always supportive,” “sometimes supportive,” or “never” (see Table 17). Two students provided additional written responses: “friends” and “the cafeteria staff is very awful, mean, [sic] discriminator and so on.”

Table 17

Frequency of Students Seeking Support from Different School Staff

Staff	Never	Sometimes	Always	<i>N</i>
ESOL Teachers	4 (4%)	25 (23%)	82 (73%)	111
History or English Teachers	7 (7%)	33 (32%)	63 (61%)	103
Math or Science Teachers	9 (9%)	33 (31%)	63 (60%)	105
School Counselors	19 (19%)	40 (39%)	43 (42%)	102
Security	22 (24%)	30 (32%)	41 (44%)	93
Language Teachers	21 (22%)	35 (38%)	37 (40%)	93
Principal or Assistant Principal	31 (34%)	32 (34%)	29 (32%)	92
School Nurse	28 (32%)	34 (38%)	26 (30%)	88
Secretaries and Front Office	35 (40%)	28 (32%)	25 (28%)	88
PE Teachers	36 (41%)	27 (31%)	24 (28%)	87
CWS Counselors	31 (36%)	36 (42%)	19 (22%)	86
Art Teachers	37 (43%)	33 (39%)	15 (18%)	85
Cafeteria Staff	37 (44%)	33 (39%)	15 (17%)	85
Librarian	46 (53%)	29 (33%)	12 (14%)	87
Other	3 (22%)	6 (43%)	5 (35%)	14

When I am at school, I _____ (think school is important, think classwork is meaningful, am proud of accomplishments, try my best even if it's hard, feel safe, have opportunities to play sports or be in clubs, and have friends.) More than 99% of the students “strongly agreed” ($n = 132$) or “agreed” ($n = 16$) that school is important. Of the 140 responses about classwork being meaningful, 66% ($n = 93$) “strongly agree” that it is meaningful and 28% ($n = 39$) “agree” that it is meaningful. More than 97% ($n = 138$) of the students responded that they “strongly agreed” or “agreed” to the statement “I

have friends.” Most students “strongly agreed” ($n = 105$, 73%) or “agreed” ($n = 34$, 23%) that they were proud of their accomplishments, as well as “strongly agreed” ($n = 102$, 69%) or “agreed” ($n = 43$, 29%) that they try their best even if it is hard (see Table 18).

Only 57% ($n = 81$) of the students selected “strongly agree” and 36% ($n = 51$) selected “agree” when asked if they feel safe at school. The response to *I have opportunities to play sports or be in clubs* also showed a decline: “strongly agree” ($n = 63$, 44%) and “agree” ($n = 52$, 37%). Four of the five other responses under this question had 100 plus responses in the strongly agree category.

Table 18*Students' Opinions of School*

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N	M	SD
I think being in school is important	1 (.6%)	0 (0%)	16 (10%)	132 (89%)	149	1.13	0.39
I think that my classwork is meaningful	2 (1%)	6 (4%)	39 (28%)	93 (66%)	140	1.41	0.64
I am proud of my accomplishments	0 (0%)	5 (3%)	34 (23%)	105 (73%)	144	1.31	0.53
I try my best even if it's hard	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	43 (29%)	102 (69%)	147	1.33	0.53
I feel safe	2 (1%)	7 (5%)	51 (36%)	81 (57%)	141	1.50	0.66
I have opportunities to play sports or be in clubs	9 (6%)	18 (13%)	52 (37%)	63 (44%)	142	1.81	0.89
I have friends	0 (0%)	4 (3%)	30 (21%)	108 (76%)	142	1.27	0.50

Student/teacher/school focus group results. Teacher and student support was another commonly discussed theme in the focus groups. Four questions captured responses in this theme: 14) *What do you wish your teachers or administrators knew about you?*; 6) *What do teachers do to help you in school?*; 7) *How do students support or not support each other?*; and 5) *What has helped you learn English?* Table 19 displays how students support and don't support one another.

What do you wish your teachers or administrators knew about you? When one student said he wished that teachers understand that they don't speak English, three other

students nodded in agreement. “The tests are in English, and we don’t understand them,” added another student. A different student said there are so many tests in English, and “They are hard for us—even if the tests were in Spanish.” Another student said that they want the teachers to know that not everybody has the capacity to learn as quickly as others.

Students also discussed how they want more dialogue about their class schedules. A student said, “I wish that they knew what classes we wanted. Another student said they don’t give me options. I wanted to change a class, and they wouldn’t allow me to do it.” A student who wants to be a psychologist said that she doesn’t get to take the classes that prepare her for college or a career. Another students added, “I want more college readiness classes.”

Each discussion at the different schools included a dialogue about disrespect. The students talked about staff members who don’t trust them. “The librarian doesn’t let me check out a book, and she doesn’t help me. When I walk in there, she asks me questions that she doesn’t ask other students.” Another student asked, “Why do they have people here who don’t care about us?” A few students said that they wish the teachers knew what they have been through and they would understand that they have family problems. One student said, “They don’t see value or appreciate when we use our creativity on our classwork. The teachers don’t always value any portion of creativity that we put into the paper.” A few students said that some of their teachers don’t read what they write and “just grade without reading.”

Two students talked about being intelligent and not stupid. “They should appreciate us. Everybody is different. I have a cousin who says he doesn’t like his

opportunities, and his mom talks to him about scholarships, but he is discouraged when he comes to school,” he said. Another student added, “They don’t value us all equally, because some teachers prefer the other students over us.”

What do teachers do to help you in school? Students discussed how supportive teachers would explain things many times and allow them to work in different ways to understand the language. They said that teachers are helpful when they introduce new topics and how to do work. One student said, “They explain the things like five million times over.” The supportive teachers answer questions, explain the work, help students at the beginning of class, make them read more, and put them into groups. They also described teachers as “friendly” and said that homework practice helps.

They talked about an algebra teacher who made learning accessible and cared about who they were. Some of the students praised their algebra teacher more. Then, five students shook their heads, and one student said that teachers “don’t really help us a lot, they don’t accept us.” Another student said that some teachers “discriminate” and another student said, “Nothing.”

They also talked about their ESOL teachers with admiration and appreciation, recognizing that most of them have a great love and sense of concern for them. Several students nodded in agreement when students talked about ESOL teachers. One student said, “Only the ESOL teachers and the ESOL paraprofessional help me.”

How do students support or not support each other? Students said that other students support them by helping them when they don’t understand (see Table 19.) “We help each other, so we can understand better,” said one student. They also translate for each other and explain when they don’t understand due to language barriers. Another

student said, “They give us confidence, so we’re not shy.” One student explained that she and her friends help the newcomers. A student who had arrived to the school in the last year nodded in agreement. “It’s true. When I didn’t know the hallways, they helped me,” he said as he put his arm around the student who supported the newcomers.

Table 19

Selected Survey Responses on Students Supporting Students

Support	Not Support
Help me when I don’t understand	Call us derogatory names in Spanish
Translate	Laugh at us if we don’t speak English well
Give us confidence, so we’re not shy	Tell us we are stealing their opportunities
Help the newcomers	Act like they are better than us

What has helped you learn English? Students shared a variety of strategies that helped them learn English. More than half of the respondents during the focus groups said that they watched/listened to different media (music, lectures, cartoons, Dora, SpongeBob, movies with captions, and shows with friends). Seven students said that they practice English with other people, including their siblings and someone who can explain the definitions/meanings to them. Four students said that paying attention in class or to friends helped them learn English. Six students said that reading and writing more helped them; and five students said that teachers and school helped them. Other responses included technology, apps, and learning at their job.

Students engaged in conversations about what makes school challenging or difficult in the focus group. The dialogue included language, academic challenges, disrespect, and work. Students said, “When we have a class just with Americans, we don’t understand what they are saying and no one translates.” Another student said that when the class only has Spanish speakers, it helps them more as they will support each

other. He said it is more challenging when they have to translate on their own in the other classes. Another student said the homework is hard, because they don't know English.

Students also talked about the academic challenges, including the state assessments and PARCC exams. "There were a lot of words that I had to learn. It can even be hard for the students who were born here to learn all the words, and it makes it hard in school," said a student. Another student said that there are so many different classes, and they have to work harder.

Summary. Most students seek out support from family or friends before school staff when it comes to sharing problems. Turning to family or friends for personal problems is a strong support. When students have academic questions, they turn to teachers that care about them, counselors that they know, and other school staff with whom they have developed a rapport. However, one in four students indicated that there is nobody who can help them with their homework when they are at home. The relationships with school staff depended on the individuals in those roles and the depth of the relationship and trust. When it came to studying English, the teachers and peers who take the time to both support and challenge the students help them build the confidence and the skills they need in English.

Research Question 2: What external and internal challenges do high school Latino ELLs face in obtaining a diploma?

Thirteen survey questions and four focus group questions addressed external and internal challenges. The supports were broadly categorized into limited time, cultural dissonance, and the journey to the United States/reunification. In the following sections,

the survey responses are followed by focus group responses that pertained to each of the three categories of challenges: Limited Time, Cultural Dissonance, and Journey to the United States/Reunification.

Limited time survey results. Students faced the challenge of time, including managing time and the age of arrival to the United States. Survey questions 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, and 31 addressed items pertaining to the challenges of limited time. These questions included: 9) *During the average week of school, I usually spend ____ doing homework or studying;* 10) *During the average week of school, I usually spend ____ working;* 11) *At this time of my life, ____ (work or don't work);* 14) *I have gone to school for a total of ____ (amount of school);* 15) *I left my native country, I arrived in the U.S., I arrived in this state, and I started school in the U.S. when I was ____;* and 31) *At school, I participate in ____ (sports, clubs, dances, family events).* Tables 20, 21, 22, and 23 present the results of these survey questions.

Age students left their native country, arrived in the U.S., and started school.

Students provided the age range of when they left their native country and came to this state to start school. The majority of students ($n = 96$, 62.7%) in this study arrived to the U.S. and started school in this state at age 15 or older. An additional 27% ($n = 40$) of the students arrived between the ages of 12 and 14. Many of them were placed into grade 9 due to their beginning level of English (see Table 20).

Table 20*Students' Ages of Emigrating and Immigrating*

Question	Age				<i>N</i>
	0-4	5-11	12-14	15-20	
I left my native country when I was...	0 (0%)	10 (6%)	47 (31%)	96 (63%)	153
I arrived in the U.S. when I was...	0 (0%)	10 (7%)	44 (29%)	96 (64%)	150
I arrived in this state when I was...	0 (0%)	9 (6%)	39 (27%)	98 (67%)	146
I started school in the U.S. when I was...	1 (.6%)	8 (5%)	40 (27%)	97 (66.4%)	146

Students' entry into the United States ranged from one month before the surveys to being born in the United States (see Table 21). The responses ($n = 159$) included the following dates: 2015 ($n = 12$); 2014 ($n = 59$); 2013 ($n = 52$); 2012 ($n = 20$); 2011 ($n = 4$); 2010 ($n = 4$); 2009 ($n = 7$); 2006 ($n = 1$); and born in the United States ($n = 1$).

Table 21*Surveyed Students' Years in U.S. by Arrival Date*

U.S. Arrival	Years in U.S.	Students (<i>n</i> = 159)
2015	<1	12
2014	<2	59
2013	<3	52
2012	<4	20
2011	<5	4
2010	<6	4
2009	<7	7
2006	<10	1
U.S. Born	Lifetime	1

I have gone to school for a total of ____ (amount of school). Students selected the number of years that they did or did not attend school (see Table 22). Ten students said they did not attend school before their current high school. On the opposite end of the learning spectrum, 43% (*n* = 66) of them had attended high school outside of the United States, and 19% (*n* = 29) had attended another high school before their current school. The wide range of educational experiences creates a variety of entry points that may or may not lead to clear graduation pathways.

Table 22*Prior School Completion Outside and Inside the U.S.*

Prior Years Completed	Outside U.S.	In U.S.	<i>N</i>
0 years, no school before current high school	10	20	30
1-3 years	12	84	96
4-6 years	11	11	22
7-8 years	73	10	83
Attended high school outside of the U.S.	66	29	95

During the average week of school, I usually spend ____ doing homework or studying. More than 58% ($n = 90$) said they completed one to two hours of homework weekly (see Table 23). The phrasing of the question could be interpreted in multiple ways, and the students may have responded to the time invested in nightly homework versus weekly homework. The next largest responses were 16% ($n = 25$) who selected two to three hours and 12% ($n = 18$) who selected less than one hour.

Table 23*Average Amount of Time Spent on Weekly Homework*

Average Time	<i>N</i>	Percentage
Less than one hour	18	12%
1-2 hours	90	58%
2-3 hours	25	16%
3-4 hours	10	6%
4-5 hours	4	3%
6-10 hours	7	4%
More than 10 hours	2	1%

Note. $N = 156$.

During the average week of school, I usually spend ____ working. During the average week of school, more than 37% ($n = 53$) of students said they worked less than

an hour a weekly, and 21% ($n = 30$) of students said they worked 1-2 hours weekly. The other responses included 16% ($n = 23$) spent 4-5 hours working; 9% ($n = 13$) on 3-4 hours working; 8% ($n = 11$) on 6-10 hours working; 3% ($n = 5$) on 16-20 hours working; 3% ($n = 5$) on 21-30 hours working; and 3% ($n = 3$) on 31-40 hours working.

At this time of my life, _____ (to work or not to work). Less than half of the students ($n = 68$, 43%) students said they work. This number did not capture the other types of work that students shared during the focus groups, such as working with family members, responsibilities at home, or taking care of siblings, nephews or nieces. More than 37% ($n = 58$) of students said they didn't work because they were a student, and 27% ($n = 43$) of students said they worked because they wanted to work. The other responses included 20% ($n = 31$) that said they didn't work because they couldn't get a job; and 16% ($n = 25$) that said they worked because they had to work (see Table 24).

Table 24

Student Responses about Having a Job

Survey Response	<i>N</i>	Percentage
I work because I want to work.	43	27%
I work because I have to work.	25	16%
I don't work because I am a student.	58	37%
I don't work because I can't get a job.	31	20%

Note. $N = 157$

At school, I participate in _____. Students answered six different questions about their participation in school activities/events (see Table 25). The majority of students selected rarely and never in all five of the categories: playing sports (56.9%), going to sports events/games (65%), being in a club (70%), dances (86%), and family events

(73.6%). In response to the open-ended drop box under “other,” students wrote: “my friends,” “I work after school,” and “school events.”

Table 25

Student Participation in School Activities

Question	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Playing a sport at school	47	31	31	28	137	2.29	1.15
Going to a sports events or games at school	49	39	26	21	135	2.14	1.08
Being in a before or after school club	73	21	17	23	134	1.93	1.17
Dances at school	94	19	11	7	131	1.47	.86
Family events at the school	66	29	24	10	129	1.83	.99
Other	21	6	7	7	41	2.00	1.21

Limited time focus group results. Limited time due to late arrival in U.S. schools, work, and family expectations was a theme in the focus group discussions. The two focus group questions with responses showing the limited time of the students were questions: 10) *Do you work? How many hours do you work? How do you balance school and work?* and 14) *What do you wish teachers and administrators knew about you?*

Do you work? How many hours do you work? How do you balance school and work? Students said the work was a challenge. Some of the students at the early school complained that they work late and it is hard to get to school so early; others at the late school shared the complaint but said it is hard to get to their job late because of the late ending school hours.

Students worked a variety of paid and unpaid hours. Some students worked up to 40 hours a week Monday through Friday; others worked up to 40 hours a week on the weekends. A student said she worked three hours on weekday nights, 11 hours on Saturday, and nine hours on Sunday. Another one said he works eight hours a day on weekdays except Wednesday. “It’s really hard, but I know if I study, then I will have a better job to prepare me for my future. It’s a sacrifice that will help me,” said one student. Another student said she works five hours per day, “I do all my homework after work. I go to bed late at 1 am.”

Other students have the obligation to work by taking care of their younger family members. She said, “I take care of kids after school. Sometimes I stay here and do my work before I have to go home.” Another student shared that she was taking care of her brother’s baby a few days a week. “It’s hard because you tell them to do something and they don’t. It’s hard to do homework when they are screaming and doing something else, and you have to stop to check on them or stop them from getting into things,” she said.

Some of the students in the focus groups referenced the challenges of work, home expectations, and living out of boundary from the school as some of the reasons for not being more involved in extracurricular activities. They also talked about not hearing their

favorite type of music at dances or on the announcements except at the ESOL international events hosted during the school day.

What do you wish teachers and administrators knew about you? Students with jobs expressed how they wish teachers and administrators understood their challenging schedules. They shared comments that included, “I wish that they knew that I worked.” Another one said, “We work to live.” A different student said, “If I miss school because of work, I wish that they understood that I am doing both.”

A student said, “School starts at 7:30 and sometimes we get here late because of work. Then, you go to detention and they don’t understand that we’re doing our best.” A different student said, “There are African American students who get here late, because they are at Dunkin Donuts and no one says anything to them.” Another student said, “The security gets on our case when we are late.”

Cultural dissonance survey results. Survey question 28 and two focus group questions addressed items pertaining to the cultural dissonance and attitudes/perceptions. These questions included: 28) *When I think about the students at my school, I think that ____*. Table 26 presents the results of these survey questions.

When I think about the students at my school, I think that ____. Students ($n = 145$) responded to questions about perceptions and tensions around respect and cultural differences among classmates (see Table 26). The highest marked response under “strongly agree” was “classmates respect me”; the lowest marked responses under “strongly agree” were “most students respect each other” with 23% ($n = 32$) and “ESOL students and students not in ESOL get along” with 27% ($n = 38$). Other responses that reflected tensions were “classmates respect each other” and “most students respect each

other.” Students used the Likert scale to rank what they thought about the students in their school. Students answered seven questions about their classmates by selecting whether they “strongly agree,” “agree,” “disagree,” or “strongly disagree” to the statements.

Table 26

Student Perceptions of Classmates

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N	Mean
My classmates respect me	3 (2%)	6 (4%)	60 (41%)	76 (52%)	145	1.56
My classmates respect each other	5 (3%)	24 (18%)	66 (48%)	42 (31%)	137	1.94
Most students in my school respect each other	10 (7%)	36 (27%)	60 (43%)	32 (23%)	138	2.17
My classmates want to learn	3 (2%)	11 (8%)	66 (48%)	57 (42%)	137	1.71
My classmates help each other	4 (3%)	7 (5%)	68 (50%)	56 (41%)	135	1.70
Students from different cultures and languages get along	5 (3%)	23 (17%)	57 (41%)	54 (39%)	139	1.85
ESOL students and students not in ESOL get along	17 (12%)	27 (20%)	55 (40%)	38 (28%)	137	2.17

During the focus group, students talked about biases and cultural dissonance.

These experiences and perceptions were themes in all three of the focus groups.

What do you like about school? Most students talked about their favorite class or said sports, friends, and reading/learning English. Two students shared, “I don’t really like school, but I have a goal,” said one student. Another student said, “I don’t like how some teachers are. I only like algebra. I feel like I am discriminated here.”

What surprised you in the United States? One student said, “I was surprised that there were poor people here in this country.” A different student said, “There are a lot of fights and it’s because of the racism.” Another student said, “When I first got here, I felt strange, because people around me were speaking English and I couldn’t understand it... I couldn’t come out of my house and I didn’t know the streets. A lot of times, they [people in my neighborhood] would discriminate against me. They would look at me wrong or say things to me in English. They would say bad things to me in the neighborhood.”

Students also shared that not all of the other Latino students support them. They said that some of the students call them derogatory names, such as “chele” which means a White person in El Salvador. They also call them “chanches,” because they speak less English and dress differently [less fashionably]. Additionally, a student said, “The Spanish students who were born here say that we are stealing their opportunities. They feel like they are better than us.” Another student said, “Some students tell me that I can’t do something, and then I get determined to work harder.”

During the focus groups at all three of the schools, students used the word *discrimination* to describe relationships or incidents with both teachers and students. They talked about teachers who insulted them or treated them disrespectfully. They also talked about real and perceived encounters with other students, including African

American students and Latino students who were born in the United States or whose families arrived before they did. All groups referenced derogatory terms used and talked about a school culture of “us versus them.”

Students provided examples of disrespect by both teachers and students. One student said, “The teacher asks you to read, and you don’t know the word. Teachers will yell at you, ‘This is how you say it.’ And you don’t want to be in that position.” Another student shared a different experience. “Some teachers are rude. They can be angry all the time. Sometimes they are happy and then they are angry. They don’t know how to teach us. They don’t explain things, and they want everything perfect,” said a different student.

Students also shared concerns about the American students. One student said that it is complicated. He said he goes to school every day afraid. “I’m afraid that they will treat me bad. They say the African Americans are violent. I’m afraid that they will hit me or hurt me. They haven’t done anything, but I’m afraid,” he said. Another student said that there are some very unkind African Americans in this school. A different student responded that “you may accidentally bump into them in the hallway, and they will get mad at you and insult you. You don’t say anything, because you are afraid that they will hurt you physically.”

Journey to U.S./Reunification focus group results. One focus group question asked students about their journeys to the United States. Their responses also captured personal examples of reunification and the challenges of reconnecting with family after many years.

Did you travel with your family when you came here? If not, whom did you travel with and how long were you separated from the family you are living with now?

Eight of the students traveled alone and met up with other people as they traveled. Some of the groups included family, and some of the groups included people they did not know before their journey. One student remembered that it was hard to come alone. She said, “I came alone because my brother and sister came first by plane. I then came by airplane alone, because my dad was working.”

Two other students shared their personal journeys, and many of the students nodded and cried as they told about their travels from Latin America to the Mid-Atlantic Region of the U.S.

Student L’s journey. “My mom didn’t want me to come...I wanted to come to get to know her and know my other sister,” she said because her mom left when she was a toddler. “It was very difficult to leave my grandparents behind, and I came with my uncle. Then, we got together with a group [to make the journey from Central America to the U.S.]. It was very hard, because all of them were older. (They traveled a long way.) After we passed by a river, we had to run a lot. For one day, all we did was run,” she said.

She continued to tell how they were in a desert and “everything was dark.” They had to hide and later got into a car, which had an accident. “Two people died there. Then, there were a lot of people running when the police came. It was very difficult. Somebody grabbed me,” she said. The police took her away in a car to a place that was freezing which students refer to as “hielo” (the holding center for students seeking refuge/unaccompanied minors which are air-conditioned centers near the U.S./Mexico

border.) She described it as really cold and very difficult with a lot of people. She was unable to take a bath, and lights were always on. She said she didn't know if it was day or night, and she spent seven days there. Then, she remembers going somewhere very pretty with good food for a month. She could bathe and talk to her mother on the phone.

She remembers how strange it was when they took her to the airport so she could fly to her mom. When she arrived here, "everything was strange." She didn't know how to navigate through the airport. When she saw her mother for the first time that she could remember, she said it was really beautiful. Her mom had a big bag for her, and she took off running toward her to give her a big hug. She cried tears of joy.

Student M's journey. "At the beginning, I didn't want to come to this country," she said, but her mom kept asking for her. The student said that she had problems with her father. When he tried to kill her, her mother who lived in the U.S. told her she should come in December. She was reluctant until her father tried to kill her again, and her brothers and sister helped her get out. They left their country and went to Mexico.

The student said, "A person tried to be sexual with me. I was the only young girl, and I was a minor. They said that my brother would have to pass for my husband, so the other [travelers] would respect me." She said that when they got to the river, they got on a raft and it ripped. They each had to swim on their own, and then a police boat approached them. "I was by myself. I swam to land, and I started running. After running for four hours, I found my sister," she said. She had passed out under a tree. She woke her up, they talked, and then they slept on the rocks. When they continued to walk, they found much of the group again, including her brother.

They walked for three more days, and they had to pass through an extremely long tunnel. She continued, “We had to go on our knees. It was dark and hard to breathe. There were stones and rocks making us bleed. I was the first to come out. Then, I heard people screaming inside.” She continued to say that as others came out of the tunnel, they told her that there was a person inside who was suffocating and dying.

“I thought it was my sister, so I went back inside the tunnel. I found three dead people in there. It wasn’t my sister, but she had passed out. I found my brother was carrying her,” she said. “There were 30 people who started at the first end of the tunnel and then only 15 who ended on the outside of the tunnel.”

They went to a house where the males and females were separated. “We could hear the women being raped in the room next to us. We were there for two days. Then the guy who was with me came and found me and said they were abusing my brother,” she said. She found a way out of the house and told them to leave her brother alone. “They told me that if it were not him, then it would be me. I said I don’t care,” she continued. They started to attack her, so she ran. Somehow, she and her siblings were able to leave by car.

“I had to hide in the cushions of the seat. Then, somebody pulled us over, and they got everybody out of the car, including my brother,” she said. “I was stuck in the car, inside the seat, where I stayed quiet.”

“Later when I didn’t hear anyone, I tried to get out, but my pants were stuck. Everybody else had taken off running,” she said. She waited a long time, trapped under the seat. “I was very afraid. Then, my brother and sister came back for me.” She had to rip off most of her pants to get out. They started running again.

While on the run, her brother hit something with thorns and started bleeding in his head. “We decided if he died, we would not continue. My brother was unconscious for three days.” After waiting beside him, they decided to turn themselves in to get him help. “When the officials came, they asked me if everyone was fine. They gave him something to drink and took him to the hospital,” she said. They had him in the hospital for a day and kept her and her sister in another place. When he returned from the hospital, the three of them were back together.

“They asked us questions about our age. I wanted to say I was 18, so I could stay with my brother and sister. My brother made me tell the truth,” she continued. “I got to call my mom, but I hadn’t seen her for 16 years.”

“It was strange. To me, it was like she was dead. I talked to her, and she started crying. Because I was a minor, I had the right to stay [in the United States],” she said. “I was there one night and then they told me I had to leave my siblings. I saw them through a window. It was very difficult, because they were like my parents. She was then moved to another state.

“I got to call my mom and tell her about my new home [a temporary home]. I had a social worker and they allowed my mom to send me clothes and things that I needed,” she said. “I had two phone calls a week, and I would talk to my mom. When my siblings were released, they were able to be with her. Then, I started crying, ‘Why am I not there? Why not me?’”

“When they told me that somebody had stabbed my sister, I started cutting myself. I got medical attention for cutting myself every night. They gave me special

attention. They wouldn't let me have anything," she said. "Then after four months, I told my mom I could leave. Because I wasn't cutting myself, I could go."

"When I left out, I had residency papers. I came on an airplane, and I didn't recognize my mother," she said. She remembered how confusing the airport was and that her mother had paid someone to look for her at the airport; they reunited. "She was there with balloons and a stuffed animal that was bigger than I was. It was hard because she wasn't a mother to me."

"My brother said this is your mom. Then, I fussed at her, because she left me for all those years. I told her, 'You are not my mother,'" she said. Then, her brother reminded her that she was now safely with her family because of what her mother did. "It was hard, but I accepted her. I got calls from my dad, only to learn he wasn't my real dad," she said.

She learned that her dad had wanted to kill her, because he thought she wasn't his real daughter. "My mother said he is, and he said he is not. Now I have a good relationship with my uncles and my mother. I thank God for everything I went through and where I am now," she said. Her story left many of the students in tears.

Summary. When educators create safe spaces to share concerns and experiences, students are willing to discuss more openly and honestly. Students in all three schools shared stories about both perceived and real cross-cultural misunderstandings and xenophobic attitudes. They shared examples of hardships and revealed experiences that can cause post-traumatic stress disorder. They revealed their challenges when it comes to reunification with parents or family members that are unfamiliar to them. Students adjust to transitions far greater than just the English language.

Research Question 3: How do the students' cultural expectations support or hinder their educational trajectory?

Five survey questions and one focus group question captured how the students' cultural expectations support or hinder their educational trajectory. The responses are viewed through the lens of cultural expectations. In the following sections, the survey responses are followed by focus group responses that pertained to this theme.

Cultural expectations survey results. Survey questions 16, 18, 13, 19, and 20 addressed items pertaining to cultural expectations. These questions are discussed in the following order and included: 16) *Before I came to the United States, I was _____.*; 18) *Prior to starting school, what were you doing?*; 13) *Before and after coming to the U.S., I hoped to finish _____*; 19) *When I think about my future, (myself/my family/ teachers) want to (start working full-time, quit school, graduate from high school, go to college, don't know);* and 20) *My family's expectations in the United States are the same as my family's expectations in my home country.* Tables 27, 28, 29, 30, and 31 present the results of these survey questions.

Before I came to the United States, I was _____. Students selected among six options for what they had been doing prior to coming to the United States (see Table 27). More than 89% ($n = 138$) of the students said they were going to school before coming to the United States. More than 16% ($n = 25$) said they were helping family, and 14% ($n = 21$) were working. Additionally, 5% ($n = 8$) of the students selected other, and 3% ($n = 5$) said that they were too young to remember. Nobody responded that they were in a gang.

The “other” category had an open response. Four of the eight students who selected “other” provided additional responses: 1) racing bikes; 2) I was in a stylist academy; 3) taking care of my grandparents who were very old; and 4) studying in the university.

Table 27

Student Activities before Coming to the U.S.

Activity	<i>N</i>	Percentage
Going to school	138	89%
Helping family	25	16%
Working	21	14%
In a gang	0	0%
Too young to remember	5	3%
Other	8	5%

Note. *N* = 155.

Prior to starting school, what were you doing? Students who did not register and start school in AUD within the first month of coming to this state were asked what they were doing prior to starting school. The students who did not immediately start school upon arrival said they were waiting for forms or health records (*n* = 42, 37%) necessary to enroll. Another 14% (*n* = 16) of the students were working before coming to school.

Before coming to the U.S., I hoped to finish _____. (grade 8, grade 10, grade 12, 2 years of college, 4 years of college, graduate school, and didn’t plan to attend school.) Before coming to the United States, 68 responded that they hoped to finish 8th grade, 38 responded that they hoped to finish 10th grade, and 51 responded that they hoped to finish 12th grade. For two-year college, 18 clicked on this option; for four-year

college, 16 clicked on this option. The graduate degree option had 25 clicks, and eight students responded that they did not plan to attend school.

After coming to the U.S., I hoped to finish _____. (grade 8, grade 10, grade 12, 2 years of college, 4 years of college, graduate school, and didn't plan to attend school.)

Students were asked to click all the choices that applied about their hopes of completing different levels of school after coming to the United States ($n = 263$); however, the number of students who responded was not captured and students could click on multiple responses. After coming to the United States, students hoped to finish 8th grade ($n = 26$), they hoped to finish 10th grade ($n = 61$), and they hoped to finish 12th grade ($n = 63$). Students also said they hoped to attend a two-year college ($n = 28$); they hoped to attend a four-year college ($n = 34$); and they hoped to obtain a graduate degree option ($n = 49$). There was also the selection of not planning to attend school ($n = 2$).

By comparing the two tables, the expectations of going beyond 8th grade show growth in every category and a decrease of responses to the question about not planning to attend school (see Table 28.) These increases in each column reflect an increased interest in acquiring more education compared to the original personal or cultural expectation.

Table 28*School Expectations Before and After Coming to the U.S.*

Expected Educational Completion	Before Arrival	After Arrival	Change
Grade 8	68	26	-42
Grade 10	38	61	+23
Grade 12	51	63	+12
2 years of college	18	28	+10
4 years of college	16	34	+18
Graduate degree (6 years of college or more)	25	49	+24
Did not plan to attend school	8	2	-6

Prior to starting school, what were you doing? Students who were out of school for more than a month upon arrival in the United States said that they passed the time at home ($n = 48$), and they were waiting for forms or health records ($n = 42$). Sixteen students responded that they were working prior to going to school; six of them were getting settled in or living in different places; and 16 selected other (see Table 26). Additional short responses ($n = 14$) included: organizing papers to attend school; school vacation; working; taking care of a nephew; going to church; working with my dad; finishing high school in my country; and getting accustomed to the U.S.

Table 29*Student Activities Prior to Starting School in the U.S.*

Activity	N	Percentage
Working	16	14%
Waiting for forms or health records	42	37%
Getting settled in or living in different places	6	5%
At home	48	42%
Other	16	14%

I (myself/family/teachers) want to (start working full-time, quit school, graduate from high school, go to college, don't know) Students responded to three sets of questions about their own expectations of themselves after arriving in the United States, as well as their family and their teachers' expectations of them. The students' desire to work is self-motivated ($n = 57$) more than family ($n = 41$) or teacher ($n = 26$) (see Table 30.) Additionally, most of the responding students ($n = 120$, 91%) said their own expectation is to go to college, which compared similarly to family ($n = 113$, 93%) and teachers ($n = 109$, 94%).

Table 30

Expectations from Self, Family and Teachers in the U.S.

Expectations for Student	Student	Family	Teachers
Start working full-time	57	41	26
Quit school	27	19	20
Graduate from high school	118	111	103
Go to college	120	113	109
Don't know	10	10	9

My family's expectations in the United States are the same as my family's expectations in my home country. More than half of the students 61% ($n = 92$) said their family's expectations in the U.S. were the same as their family's expectations in their home country (see Table 31). The number of students who said that their family's expectations in the U.S. are not the same as their expectations in their home country was 39% ($n = 58$).

Table 31

Family Expectations for Student in the U.S. Compared to Home Country

Comparison	Response	Percentage
Expectations Same	92	61%
Expectations Different	58	39%

Note. $N = 150$.

Cultural expectations focus group results. Cultural expectations were an emerging theme during several questions. Specifically, focus group question two captures inquires about student expectations.

Before you came to the United States, what grade did you complete in your country? How much reading and writing did you do in your classes? Many students discussed what grade level they had completed before coming to the United States and whether they read more or less and wrote more or less in their home country's school. The students responses ranged between grade 6 and being out of school for a few years to graduating from grade 12 in their home country to being enrolled in college in their home country.

Students also said that they wrote more ($n = 18$) and read less ($n = 17$) in their home country. A student who had attended grade 11 at a high school in his country was placed in grade 9 when he came to AUD because of his English proficiency. He said, "My school was stricter; every day I had homework. I also had a lot of breaks during the school year, and it wasn't so strenuous."

Summary. The students who participated in the study have a sense of responsibility. They place more pressure on themselves to work than their families. School is a priority in a large number of students, and much of this group continues to

persevere with their education even when faced with big and small barriers. None of them were in a gang, despite the prevalence of gangs in some of their countries.

Research Question 4: What are the Latino ELLs' expectations of their educational and career pathway?

Seven survey questions and four focus group questions addressed the students' expectations of school and their educational/career pathway. The expectations were broadly categorized into educational values and aspirations. In the following sections, the survey responses are followed by focus group responses that pertained to each of the two categories of expectations.

Educational values survey results. Survey questions 25, 26, and 32 addressed items pertaining to the students' educational values about their current school. These were: 25) *When I am at school, _____*; 26) *When I am in class, _____*; and 32) *Is there anything else that you think will help the researcher in providing supports to high school ESOL students?*. Tables 32, 33, and 34 present the results of these survey questions.

When I am at school, _____. Students used a Likert scale for seven statements that pertained to how the students feel when they are at school (see Table 32). The seven statements asked the students whether they “strongly disagree,” “disagree,” “agree,” or “strongly agree.” The majority of students “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that “being in school is important” ($n = 148$, 99%). Most students said that classwork was meaningful ($n = 132$, 94%); they were proud of their accomplishments ($n = 139$, 96.5%); and they tried their best even if something was hard ($n = 145$, 98.6%).

Two of the statements, *I feel safe* ($n = 81$, *strongly agree*) and *I have opportunities to play sports or be in clubs* ($n = 63$, *strongly agree*) showed a decline in

the number of student of responses between *strongly agree* and *agree*. Although the numbers were still high when the two columns of *strongly agree* and *agree* were combined, the number range dropped from strongly agree to agree. Most other responses to the statements had 100 plus responses in the strongly agree category.

Table 32

Student Opinions about School

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
I think being in school is important	1 (.6%)	0 (0%)	16 (10%)	132 (89%)	1.13	0.39
I think that my classwork is meaningful	2 (1%)	6 (4%)	39 (28%)	93 (66%)	1.41	0.64
I am proud of my accomplishments	0 (0%)	5 (3%)	34 (23%)	105 (73%)	1.31	0.53
I try my best even if it's hard	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	43 (29%)	102 (69%)	1.33	0.53
I feel safe	2 (1%)	7 (5%)	51 (36%)	81 (57%)	1.50	0.66
I have opportunities to play sports or be in clubs	9 (6%)	18 (13%)	52 (37%)	63 (44%)	1.81	0.89
I have friends	0 (0%)	4 (3%)	30 (21%)	108 (76%)	1.27	0.50

When I am in class, _____. Students used the Likert scale to respond to four statements about how they feel in class and selected that they “strongly disagree,”

“disagree,” “agree,” or “strongly agree” (see Table 33.) The four statements pertained to how they would describe their academic engagement in class. Most students agreed that they understood what was being discussed in class ($n = 136$, 93%), were comfortable speaking English ($n = 122$, 87%), and could read materials independently ($n = 112$, 81%). When asked about being comfortable when reading out loud, the number in agreement declined ($n = 99$, 70%).

Table 33

Student Opinions about Class

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	M	SD
I understand what we are discussing	3 (2%)	7 (5%)	63 (43%)	73 (50%)	1.59	.68
I am comfortable reading out loud	7 (5%)	34 (24%)	59 (42%)	40 (29%)	2.06	.85
I am comfortable speaking English	2 (1%)	16 (11%)	58 (41%)	64 (46%)	1.69	.73
I can read all the materials independently	2 (1%)	24 (17%)	58 (42%)	54 (39%)	1.81	.77

Additional comments from students. Is there anything else that you think will help the researcher in providing supports to high school ESOL students? The last question on the survey was an open-ended response ($n = 67$) (see Appendix L). The

researcher categorized the short responses into eight categories: additional support for new students, cultural proficiency, gang issues, encouragement, student support, bilingual teachers, ESOL programs, and affirmations to the researcher.

The students suggested ideas for new students, such as newcomer groups and support for students not familiar with the school system who seek a sense of belonging. The students provided examples about the lack of understanding students have for each other's different cultures, as well as the adults' lack of cultural understanding in the school and community. Students wrote about racism and cultural dissonance, including comments that counselors treat them differently and that staff and students push them around because they don't speak English. One student wrote that staff at school prefer black people, and they don't support soccer time because they prefer football. They also mentioned gang issues and the need to provide support for newcomers to not be involved in them.

Another theme for the written responses was words of encouragement to the researcher. Students wrote words of affirmation to believe in themselves and their goals. The students also wrote affirmations for the researcher, such as telling her that if she achieves this objective, she will help more young people who come to this country.

In the area of student support, the comments included examples of better understanding student hardships both economically and personally. One student wrote about helping young mothers like the female student herself who said she wanted to achieve her goals and go to the university.

The need for more bilingual teachers was a recurring theme as was the need to increase them, as well as to increase the time available for the students to work with

them. Students also said that the number of ESOL programs should expand including the addition of more ESOL classes and having ESOL in their neighborhood school (as some commute long distances to ESOL centers¹). Some students provided additional information, such as how they arrived or how a family member assists them in return for assisting the family member with various responsibilities, including child rearing (see Table 34.)

¹ School C is an ESOL center: district selected school for ESOL students from within their boundary and students from neighboring boundaries whose schools do not have ESOL.

Table 34*Additional Student Survey Short Responses*

Theme	Selected Comments
Support for New Students	<p>More support to new students who wonder “now what do I have to do?” I can say that because I felt that, too. I know that to “feel safe a lot of students get in mini gangs and begin to do trouble or bullying”</p> <p>Need to “help more the students that come, because when you came to the U.S. you don’t know how people speak, how [to] communicate with the other people” and how students feel about this country and the school</p>
Cultural Proficiency	<p>Help students who are victims of racism</p> <p>“I think they should treat people with respect”</p> <p>Counselors should help us and treat us in the same manner that they treat other students</p>
Gang Issues	Provide assistance to young people who were gang members in their home country
Encouragement	<p>Provide ESOL students who are on task with incentives</p> <p>We should never give up and follow our career paths so that we can have a good future and incredible family</p>
Student Support	<p>Help the students who are absent or have problems because they might not have economic or family support and want to graduate</p> <p>Help the many young single mothers who cannot achieve graduation like me... we want to continue our education and pursue our goals</p>
Bilingual Teachers	<p>Have more bilingual teachers</p> <p>The teacher should teach English classes for more than an hour</p>
ESOL Programs	Increase the number of ESOL programs so students can be closer to home
Additional Responses	<p>I arrived by train and plane</p> <p>My aunt helps me; I take care of my cousins</p>

Affirmations to the Researcher	If she can achieve this objective, it will be a great help to many more young people who come to this country
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Student aspirations survey results. Survey questions 25, 26, and 27 addressed items pertaining to the students' educational values about their current school. Students answered three open-ended short response questions about what they want to be doing in one year, five years, and ten years. Their responses were school-centered and pro-education. These were: 25) *In one year from now, I want to be _____*; 26) *In five years from now, I want to be _____*; and 27) *In ten years from now, I want to be _____*.

In one year from now, I want to be _____. The researcher grouped the responses ($n = 144$) into three categories: advance in school, improve themselves or their English, and work in a career or job. Several of them fit into multiple categories (see Appendix K). Some of the multiple responses included speaking English, getting ahead in their studies, and moving to the next grade level. Two students provided responses that were categorized as other: one student said s/he hadn't planned anything, and another student said s/he would have a car.

In five years from now, I want to be _____. The students responses ($n = 100$) fit into five categories: career/work, college/university, military, personal goals, and undecided. Of the 100 written responses, the largest number of responses was about careers or working ($n = 49$), including doctor ($n = 9$), engineer ($n = 3$), and ten other types of jobs (see Appendix K). The next greatest response was attending or graduating college/university ($n = 46$). Two students wanted to be in the U.S. Air Force. One student said, "I haven't thought about it." Another student whose response was

categorized under personal said s/he wants to be “someone who can stand up for themselves.”

In ten years from now, I want to be _____. The researcher categorized the student responses ($n = 128$) into six categories: career/work; university degree; spouse/parent/supportive family member; personal goals; owning a house; and miscellaneous. Several of the responses fit into more than one category. The responses about the “next ten years” got more detailed with multi-themed responses, including careers/jobs ($n = 97$); being a supportive family member (spouse, supportive family member, or parent: $n=22$); graduating or having a degree ($n = 12$); and personal goals ($n = 14$) including owning a house. Students wrote about making a difference in their community and being an advocate for the Latino community. Students ($n = 8$) also listed personal accomplishments: “travel the world,” “super important person in society,” “help people,” “[be] independent,” “U.S. citizen,” and “happy/successful.” A few students ($n = 6$) said they wanted to have a house. One student said, “I haven’t thought about it.” Another student said s/he “would be old.”

Summary. Most students plan to graduate from high school and attend college. They took the time to answer the open-ended survey questions and participated in the focus groups with honesty, respect, and support for one another. These youth want to be advocates for their community, professionals, responsible family members, and most importantly, successful graduates.

Limitations

Given the magnitude of the school district’s size, the study findings and considerations may not apply to every school given that the researcher only conducted

surveys and focus groups in three purposefully selected high schools out of 15 with significant ESOL populations across the district. The schools selected were in different geographic areas of the school district in order to get a wider sampling of experiences and demographics. The research focused on a sampling size of a minimum of 50 Latino ELLs from each of the three schools, totaling 159 students. The high school Latino ELL population in the school district is over 3,500 students; it is over 20,500 for all ELLs in SY2016.

The researcher's role as an administrator in the school system may have assisted her in getting access to classrooms. For this reason, teacher participation may have been motivated by their willingness to work with the researcher based on previous relationships. Eight of the nine ESOL teachers who responded to the initial email had worked with the researcher when she had worked in Curriculum and Instruction in previous years.

Once the focus groups began, the researcher and interpreter intentionally read the questions on the paper. However, with two languages and the dynamics of the group, the researcher and interpreter may not have maintained neutral body languages in an attempt to create a level of comfort among the focus groups or to help encourage additional responses. It is possible that participants may have been influenced by unintentional responses by the adults as they sought affirmation for their responses. Additionally, some of the questions were skipped due to limited time.

Recommendations

In order to deal effectively with the important issues addressed in this study, the following actions are recommended.

At the district level:

1. Create a district-wide ELL task force to revise school policies and procedures to remove barriers for highly mobile and growing ELL populations. The task force should focus on the implications of including recent arrival ELLs in the defined graduation cohort data, student schedule designs, and school registration processes that may shut out or push out students. The Task Force should:
 - a. Recommend ways to track students from initial intake registration with a focus on avoiding pushouts/shutouts of new ELLs/overage students;
 - b. Recommend ways to revise the definition of the graduation cohort, so schools are not penalized for welcoming new arrivals at the high school level;
 - c. Recommend the extension of the policy on guardianship/custody to allow sufficient time and create supports to avoid registrars having to do summer withdrawals; and
 - d. Recommend the inclusion of ESOL data as part of the early warning indicator or design an ESOL early warning indicator.
2. Develop and implement cultural responsive programs to:
 - a. Train specific teams (teachers, administrators, and support staff including cafeteria and front office workers, nurses, counselors, security personnel, and bus drivers) using real-life scenarios focusing on the rapidly changing cultural environment of ELL students in order for staff to design solutions to effect necessary changes in their own schools and offices and in working with recent arrivals;

- b. Identify and implement a systemic multi-cultural/equity approach in the evaluation process; and
 - c. Initiate a series of Task Force sponsored dialogues with ELL students that focus on “the student experience” in the district and make on-going recommendations for change.
- 3. Provide supplementary funding for the schools and programs with high need ELLs:
 - a. Review staffing formulas to provide additional staffing or resources where needed for high concentrations of recent arrival ELLs;
 - b. Re-evaluate current supports for ELLs based on their effectiveness and make appropriate changes in positions and curricula where necessary; and
 - c. Revisit how allocated funding for ELLs from federal and state ELL programs is distributed.
- 4. Provide additional ESOL teachers, bilingual counselors, and school social workers:
 - a. Fund specialized staff with training that qualifies them to work with ELLs experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder; and
 - b. Build in student supports around trauma, sexual and physical violence, teen pregnancy, legal challenges, and family reunification.
- 5. Develop a school district professional development program using existing staff to help all personnel support and work with ELLs:
 - a. Encourage current staff to devise strategies around testing and accommodations to support ELLs in all classes and to minimize test anxiety;
 - b. Create and staff homework helplines and live chats in multiple languages for parents and students; and

- c. Encourage central office staff to place systemic attention on ELLs in their decision making including funding and staffing.
- 6. Continue to develop specialized educational opportunities for high school aged ELLs, including the enhancement of the international schools and particular programs for over-aged ELLs in partnership with area institutions of higher education.

At the School Level:

- 7. Encourage administrators, counselors, and schedulers to allow flexibility for international students to revise schedules for more rigorous classes, seek student input when selecting classes, and create pathways for ELLs to access career academies and career/technology pathways often inaccessible due to language or scheduling.
- 8. Develop an in-school capacity component that reaches out to new ELLs and their families, especially those from different countries and/or with limited English, to help families understand the school system and available resources:
 - a. Facilitate “communities of belonging” that can enable new ELLs and their families to be part of the school community; and
 - b. Create supportive partnerships to train school personnel and parents about gangs.
- 9. Design student-centered supports for ELLs, including the following:
 - a. A forum where students are able to discuss and share with a trained cultural facilitator their experiences (e.g., emigrating and immigrating, reunification) and challenges;
 - b. Interactive student activities with student leaders to enable them to build programs to promote respect, trust, and cross-cultural communication; and
 - c. Develop programs of student mentors to be assigned to new students.

10. Provide pre-semester activities led by student leaders, school counselors, and social workers to help incoming ELLs with the transition to a new academic system and cultural environment.

Future Research

This research could be replicated in other school districts, and it could be targeted to specific groups, such as newcomers, intermediate level students, females, or 12th graders. The findings could be compared to other groups of students. Given that students representing over 130 languages and countries were not included in this study if Spanish was not their first language, further research could include other language groups included in the high school ELL population. Other studies could examine and clearly define the impact of interrupted education. Additionally, a comparative study of students categorized as “Dreamers” would be of interest.

Future studies could examine instructional methods used with ELLs based on WIDA or PARCC results. Research around “reading aloud” and other reading strategies could also be explored. This study also posed questions about homework and teacher expectations, which could be further explored. Another topic to further investigate would be safety and what students define as being safe in school.

Additional focus groups could explore more deeply the findings from this study, including why more students do not participate in activities beyond the school day or engage with students from other cultures or linguistic populations. A case study on the implementation of an equity program could capture the attitudes and interactions of teachers and students.

Summary

This section presented the findings of the surveys and focus groups with high school Latino English Language Learners, ELLs. The surveys ($n = 159$) and focus group participants ($n = 37$) captured the students' voices from three different high schools in Anonymous Unified District. The students who participated in this study wanted their voices to be heard. They valued having rights, being listened to even if the language is unfamiliar, and being treated fairly. Perhaps the most important step is engaging our youth in the dialogues around success in high school and their graduation. Creating opportunities to talk about their aspirations and providing direction in how to navigate those pathways is essential.

Collectively, teachers, school leaders, and educational policy makers can help ELLs find their voices and to succeed in school. Enabling students to pursue and attain their educational aspirations is a worthy goal for everyone. While some educators may resist this commitment because of the additional challenges and unique needs of students who do not speak English, this is the goal for Anonymous Unified District and should be pursued. AUD must confront this challenge and deliberately pursue policies and practices that result in every student succeeding.

With more studying and understanding, engagement and training need to be undertaken. AUD must pursue an agenda of action now to help address the needs of students who have lived and experienced tribulations few of us can imagine. The ELL students who participated in this study are a rapidly growing part of the school system, and like all the students, deserve as much support and attention in their quest to become successful graduates.

Chavo was not a part of this research study; the researcher met him earlier in her doctoral work when she was initially gathering information. Because of the intervention and inquiry on behalf of the researcher and the initial interpreter, Chavo's counselor reviewed his transcript and enrolled him in the necessary credit recovery courses in both evening and summer school to graduate. All students need a "Chavo intervention" when someone reviews their academic plan and guides/encourages them to stay on the pathway.

Appendix A

Student Survey

Dear Student, Thanks for taking the time to answer the questions below. Your answers are about your own education both past and present. There is no right answer, just the best answer-- your own answer. Your responses will remain anonymous. We truly appreciate your honesty and taking the time to help us support ESOL students. If at any time you have questions, please raise your hand, so we can assist you. THANKS!!

Estimado Estudiante, Gracias por tomarse el tiempo para responder a las siguientes preguntas. Sus respuestas son acerca de su propia educación tanto en el pasado y el presente. No hay una respuesta correcta, sólo la mejor contestación-- su propia respuesta. Sus respuestas serán anónimas. Nosotros realmente apreciamos su honestidad y tomarse el tiempo para ayudarnos a apoyar a los estudiantes de ESOL. Si en cualquier momento usted tiene preguntas, por favor, levanten la mano, para que podamos ayudarle. ¡¡GRACIAS !!

Q1 Are you willing to participate in this 32-question survey? Esta dispuesto a participar y contestar las 32 preguntas que estan en la computadora?

☐ Click to write _____

Q2 I am in grade *Estoy en el grado*

- ☐ 9
- ☐ 10
- ☐ 11
- ☐ 12

Q3 I am currently in *Actualmente estoy en*

- ☐ ESOL Beginning/*ESOL Comienzo* (1)
- ☐ ESOL Intermediate/*ESOL Intermedio* (2)
- ☐ ESOL Advanced/*ESOL Avanzado* (3)

Q4 I am a / *Soy*

- ☐ Male/*Masculino*
- ☐ Female/*Femenino*

Q5 I am.../Tengo ..

- ☐ 13 years old/ *13 años de edad*
- ☐ 14 years old/ *14 años de edad*
- ☐ 15 years old/ *15 años de edad*
- ☐ 16 years old/ *16 años de edad*
- ☐ 17 years old/ *17 años de edad*
- ☐ 18 years old/ *18 años de edad*
- ☐ 19 years old/ *19 años de edad*
- ☐ 20 years old/ *20 años de edad*
- ☐ 21 years old/ *21 años de edad*

Q6 I was born in _____.

Nací en _____.

- ☐ Argentina
- ☐ Bolivia
- ☐ Chile
- ☐ Colombia
- ☐ Costa Rica
- ☐ Cuba
- ☐ Dominican Republic
- ☐ Ecuador
- ☐ Equatorial Guinea
- ☐ El Salvador
- ☐ Guatemala
- ☐ Honduras
- ☐ Mexico
- ☐ Nicaragua
- ☐ Panama
- ☐ Paraguay
- ☐ Peru
- ☐ Puerto Rico
- ☐ Spain
- ☐ Uruguay
- ☐ Venezuela
- ☐ United States
- ☐ OTHER

Q7 When I am at home, I talk to _____ about school. (Click all that apply)

Cuando estoy en casa, hablo con _____ sobre la escuela. (Haga clic en todo lo que corresponda)

- ☐ Parents or Guardians/ *Los padres o guardianes*
- ☐ Siblings (Brothers or Sisters)/ *Hermanos (hermanos o hermanas)*
- ☐ Friends/ *Amigos*
- ☐ Other Family Members/ *Otros miembros de la familia*
- ☐ Nobody/ *Nadie*
- ☐ Boyfriend or Girlfriend/ *Novio o Novia*
- ☐ Other/ *Otros*

Q8 When I need help with my homework, _____ helps me. (Click all that apply)

Cuando necesito ayuda con mi tarea, _____ me ayuda. (Haga clic en todo lo que corresponda)

- ☐ Parent or Guardians/ *Padres o guardianes*
- ☐ Siblings (Brothers and Sisters)/ *Hermanos (hermanos y hermanas)*
- ☐ Friends/ *Amigos*
- ☐ Other Family Members/ *Otros miembros de la familia*
- ☐ Nobody/ *Nadie*
- ☐ Boyfriend or Girlfriend/ *Novio o novia*
- ☐ Other/ *otros*

Q9 During the average week of school, I usually spend _____ doing homework or studying.

Durante la semana promedio de la escuela, por lo general paso _____ hacer los deberes o estudiar.

- ☐ Less than one hour/ *Menos de una hora*
- ☐ 1-2 hours/ *1-2 horas*
- ☐ 2-3 hours/ *2-3 horas*
- ☐ 3-4 hours/ *3-4 horas*
- ☐ 4-5 hours/ *4-5 horas*
- ☐ 6-10 hours/ *6-10 horas*
- ☐ more than 10 hours/ *más de 10 horas*

Q10 During the average week of school, I usually spend _____ working.

Durante la semana promedio de la escuela, por lo general paso _____ trabajo.

- ☐ Less than one hour/ *Menos de una hora*
- ☐ 1-2 hours/ *1-2 horas*
- ☐ 3-4 hours/ *3-4 horas*
- ☐ 4-5 hours/ *4-5 horas*
- ☐ 6-10 hours/ *6-10 horas*
- ☐ 11-15 hours/ *11-15 horas*
- ☐ 16-20 hours/ *16-20 horas*
- ☐ 21-30 hours/ *21-30 horas*
- ☐ 31-40 hours/ *31-40 horas*

Q11 At this time of my life,

En este momento de mi vida,

- ☐ I work because I want to work./ *Yo trabajo porque quiero trabajar.*
- ☐ I work because I have to work./ *Yo trabajo porque tengo que trabajar.*
- ☐ I don't work because I am a student./ *Yo no trabajo porque soy un estudiante.*
- ☐ I don't work because I can't get a job./ *Yo no trabajo porque no puedo conseguir un trabajo.*

Q12 In my neighborhood, the young people between 13 and 21 years of age...

En mi vecindario, los jóvenes de entre 13 y 21 años de edad ...

	Young people in my neighborhood/ <i>Los jóvenes de mi vecindario</i>		My best friends here/ <i>Mis mejores amigos aquí</i>	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
go to school/ <i>ir a la escuela</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
have a job/ <i>tener un trabajo</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
are in a gang/ <i>están en pandillas</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
dropped out of school/ <i>abandonado la escuela</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
participate in clubs or sports/ <i>participar en clubes o deportes</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
have lots of responsibilities at home/ <i>tiene mucha responsabilidad en el hogar</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
have a lot of time to play or hang out/ <i>tiene mucho tiempo para jugar o pasar el rato</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
go to college or plan to go/ <i>voy a la universidad o tengo planes para ir</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q13 Before coming to the U.S. and after coming to the U.S.

Antes de venir a los EE.UU. y después de llegar a los EE.UU.

	Before coming to the U.S., I hoped to finish... (click all that apply)/ <i>Antes de venir a los EE.UU, que esperas terminar (clic en todo lo que corresponda)</i>	At this moment in your life, I have completed and I plan to finish... (please be honest and click all that apply)/ <i>En este momento de su vida, he completado y tengo la intención de terminar ... (por favor, ser honesto y haga clic en todo lo que corresponda)</i>
	Before the United States/ <i>Antes de los EE.UU.</i>	After U.S./ <i>Después de los Estados Unidos</i>
Grade 8/ <i>Grado 8</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grade 10/ <i>Grado 10</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grade 12/ <i>Grado 12</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 years of college/ <i>2 años de Universidad</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 years of college/ <i>4 años de Universidad</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
graduate degree (6 years of college or more)/ <i>Título de posgrado (6 años de universidad o más)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
did not plan to attend school/ <i>No planea asistir a la escuela</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q14 I have gone to school for a total of...

He ido a la escuela para un total de ...

	Outside of the United States/ <i>Fuera de los Estados Unidos</i>	In the United States/ <i>En los Estados Unidos</i>
0, did not attend school before this school/ <i>0, no he ido a la escuela antes de esta escuela</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1-3 years/ <i>1-3 años</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4-6 years/ <i>4-6 años</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7-8 years/ <i>7-8 años</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
attended high school outside of U.S./ <i>asistido a la escuela fuera de los Estados Unidos</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q15 .

	Baby to age 4/ <i>Bebé de 4 años de edad</i>	Ages 5-11/ <i>Edad 5-11</i>	Ages 12-14/ <i>Edad 12-14</i>	Age 15 or older/ <i>Edad 15 años o más</i>
I left my native country when I was.../ <i>Yo dejé mi país natal cuando era ...</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I arrived in the United States when I was.../ <i>Llegué a los Estados Unidos cuando tenía ...</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I arrived in Maryland when I was.../ <i>Llegué a Maryland cuando yo era ...</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I started school in the United States when I was.../ <i>Empecé la escuela en los Estados Unidos cuando tenía ...</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q16 Before I came to the United States, I was _____. (Check all that apply)

Antes de venir a los Estados Unidos, estaba _____. (Marque todo lo que corresponda)

- ☐ going to school/ *en la escuela*
- ☐ helping family/ *ayudaba a la familia*
- ☐ working/ *trabajaba*
- ☐ in a gang/ *en una pandilla*
- ☐ too young to remember/ *demasiado joven para recordar*
- ☐ other/ *otros* _____

Q17 When I first came to the United States, I was out of school for...

Cuando llegué por primera vez a los Estados Unidos, yo estaba fuera de la escuela por

..

____ Weeks/ *semanas*

____ Months/ *meses*

____ Years/ *años*

Q18 If you selected weeks, skip this question. If you were in the United States for more than six months prior to starting school, what were you doing? *Si se selecciona Semanas, pase a Haga clic para escribir el texto de la pregunta. Si usted estuvo en los Estados Unidos por más de seis meses antes de comenzar la escuela, ¿qué estabas haciendo?*

☐ working/ *trabajando*

☐ waiting for forms or health records/ *esperando de formas o registros de salud*

☐ getting settled in or living in different places/ *estableciendo o viviendo en diferentes lugares*

☐ at home/ *en casa*

☐ other/ *otros* _____

Q19 When I think about my future,
Cuando pienso en mi futuro,

	The following people want me to ...me (myself) / <i>Las siguientes personas quieren que yo... yo mismo</i>		The following people want me to ... my familia/ <i>siguientes personas quieren que yo ... mi familia</i>		The following people want me to ... my teachers/ <i>Las siguientes personas quieren que yo ... mis maestros</i>	
	Yes/ Sí	No/ No	Yes/ Sí	No/ No	Yes/ Sí	No/ No
Start working full-time/ <i>Comience a trabajar a tiempo completo</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quit school/ <i>Salga de la escuela</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Graduate from high school/ <i>Graduado de la escuela secundaria</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Go to college/ <i>Ir a la universidad</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Don't know/ <i>No sabe</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q20 My family's expectations in the United States are the same as my family's expectations in my home country.

Las expectativas de mi familia en los Estados Unidos son los mismos que las expectativas de mi familia en mi país de origen.

- ☐ Yes/ Sí
- ☐ No/ No
- ☐ Please explain/ *Por favor, explique* _____

Q21 In one year from now, I want to be...
En un año a partir de ahora, yo quiero ser...

Q22 In five years from now, I want to be...
En cinco años a partir de ahora, yo quiero ser...

Q23 In ten years from now, I want to be...
En diez años a partir de ahora, yo quiero ser...

Q24 I first came to the United States in...
Llegué por primera vez a los Estados Unidos en...

Month/ mes
Year/ año

Q25 When I am at school,
Cuando estoy en la escuela,

	Strongly Agree/ <i>Muy de acuerdo</i>	Agree/ <i>De acuerdo</i>	Disagree/ <i>En desacuerdo</i>	Strongly Disagree/ <i>Muy en desacuerdo</i>
I think being in school is important/ <i>Creo que estar en la escuela es importante</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think that my classwork is meaningful/ <i>Creo que mi trabajo en clase es significativo</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am proud of my accomplishments/ <i>Estoy orgulloso de mis logros</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I try my best even if it is hard/ <i>Hago mi mejor aun si es difícil</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel safe/ <i>Me siento seguro</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have opportunities to play sports or be in clubs/ <i>Tengo la oportunidad de practicar deportes o estar en clubes</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have friends/ <i>Tengo amigos</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q26 When I am in class,
Cuando estoy en clase,

	Strongly Agree/ <i>Muy de acuerdo</i>	Agree/ <i>De acuerdo</i>	Disagree/ <i>En desacuerdo</i>	Strongly Disagree/ <i>Muy en desacuerdo</i>
I understand what we are discussing/ <i>Entiendo lo que estamos discutiendo</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am comfortable reading out loud/ <i>Estoy cómodo leyendo en voz alta</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am comfortable speaking English/ <i>Estoy muy cómodo hablando inglés</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can read all the materials independently/ <i>Soy capaz de leer todos los materiales de forma independiente</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q27 When I think about my teachers, I think that...

Cuando pienso en mis maestros, creo que...

	Strongly Agree/ <i>Muy de acuerdo</i>	Agree/ <i>De acuerdo</i>	Disagree/ <i>En desacuerdo</i>	Strongly Disagree/ <i>Muy en desacuerdo</i>
My teachers help me/ <i>Mis maestros me ayudan</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My teachers encourage me to try/ <i>Mis maestros me animan a tratar</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My teachers know me/ <i>Mis profesores me conocen</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I learn a lot from my teachers/ <i>Aprendo mucho de mis maestros</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My ESOL and history teachers help me understand/ <i>Mis maestros de ESOL e historia me ayudan a entender</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My teachers talk about college/ <i>Mis maestros hablan de la universidad</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can talk to my teachers when there is a problem/ <i>Yo puedo hablar con mis maestros cuando hay un problema</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My math and science teachers help me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<p>understand/ <i>Mis maestros de matemáticas y ciencias me ayudan a entender</i></p> <p>My teachers treat me fairly/ <i>Mis maestros me tratan de manera justa</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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Q28 When I think about the students at my school, I think that...

Cuando pienso en los estudiantes de mi escuela, yo creo que...

	Strongly Agree/ <i>Muy de acuerdo</i>	Agree/ <i>De acuerdo</i>	Disagree/ <i>En desacuerdo</i>	Strongly Disagree/ <i>Muy en desacuerdo</i>
My classmates respect me/ <i>Mis compañeros me respetan</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My classmates respect each other/ <i>Mis compañeros de clase se respetan mutuamente</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Most students in my school respect each other/ <i>La mayoría de los estudiantes de mi escuela se respetan mutuamente</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My classmates want to learn/ <i>Mis compañeros quieren aprender</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My classmates help each other/ <i>Mis compañeros se ayudan entre sí</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students from different cultures & languages get along/ <i>Estudiantes de</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<i>diferentes culturas y lenguas se llevan bien</i> ESOL students and students not in ESOL get along/ <i>Estudiantes de ESOL y no ESOL se llevan bien</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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Q29 When I have a problem, I talk to..

Cuando tengo un problema, puedo hablar...

	<i>always/ siempre</i>	<i>sometimes/ a veces</i>	<i>never/ nunca</i>
my teachers/ <i>mis maestros</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
my counselors/ <i>mis consejeros</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
my school leaders/ <i>mis líderes escolares</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
my friends/ <i>mis amigos</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
my family/ <i>mi familia</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
other/ <i>otros</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q30 Please click on the groups of people and put (drop and drag) them under the column that best describes who you can ask for help or support when you need it.

Por favor, haga clic en los grupos de personas y poner (caída y arrastre) bajo la columna que describe mejor que puedes pedir ayuda o apoyo cuando lo necesite.

Always supportive/ <i>Siempre me apoyan</i>	Sometimes supportive/ <i>A veces me apoyan</i>	Never ask for support/ <i>Nunca pido apoyo</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> ESOL teachers/ <i>maestros de ESOL</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> ESOL teachers/ <i>maestros de ESOL</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> ESOL teachers/ <i>maestros de ESOL</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Math or science teachers/ <i>maestros de matemáticas o ciencias</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Math or science teachers/ <i>maestros de matemáticas o ciencias</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Math or science teachers/ <i>maestros de matemáticas o ciencias</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> History or English teachers/ <i>maestros de historia o de inglés</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> History or English teachers/ <i>maestros de historia o de inglés</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> History or English teachers/ <i>maestros de historia o de inglés</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Librarian/ <i>bibliotecario</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Librarian/ <i>bibliotecario</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Librarian/ <i>bibliotecario</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Principal or Assistant Principal/ <i>director o subdirector</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Principal or Assistant Principal/ <i>director o subdirector</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Principal or Assistant Principal/ <i>director o subdirector</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Secretaries and Front Office/ <i>secretarías y la oficina</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Secretaries and Front Office/ <i>secretarías y la oficina</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Secretaries and Front Office/ <i>secretarías y la oficina</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> PE Teachers/ <i>maestros de Educación Física</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> PE Teachers/ <i>maestros de Educación Física</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> PE Teachers/ <i>maestros de Educación Física</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Art Teachers/ <i>maestros del arte</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Art Teachers/ <i>maestros del arte</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Art Teachers/ <i>maestros del arte</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Language Teachers/ <i>maestros de idiomas</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Language Teachers/ <i>maestros de idiomas</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Language Teachers/ <i>maestros de idiomas</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> School Counselors/ <i>consejeros escolares</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> School Counselors/ <i>consejeros escolares</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> School Counselors/ <i>consejeros escolares</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> ISCO Counselors/ <i>consejeros de ISCO</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> ISCO Counselors/ <i>consejeros de ISCO</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> ISCO Counselors/ <i>consejeros de ISCO</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Cafeteria Staff/ <i>personal de la cafetería</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Cafeteria Staff/ <i>personal de la cafetería</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Cafeteria Staff/ <i>personal de la cafetería</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> School Nurse/ <i>enfermera de la escuela</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> School Nurse/ <i>enfermera de la escuela</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> School Nurse/ <i>enfermera de la escuela</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Security/ <i>seguridad</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Security/ <i>seguridad</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Security/ <i>seguridad</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Other/ <i>otros</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Other/ <i>otros</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Other/ <i>otros</i>

Q31 At school, I participate in...

En la escuela, yo participo en...

	Never/ <i>nunca</i>	Rarely/ <i>rara vez</i>	Sometimes/ <i>a veces</i>	Often/ <i>muchas veces</i>
Playing a sport at school/ <i>Practicar un deporte en la escuela</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Going to a sports events & games at school/ <i>asistir a una serie de eventos deportivos & juegos en la escuela</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being in a before or after school club/ <i>estar en un club de antes o después de la escuela</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dances at school/ <i>Danzas en la escuela</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Family events at the school/ <i>Eventos de familia en la escuela</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other/ <i>otros</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q32 Is there anything else that you think will help the researcher in providing supports to high school ESOL students?

¿Hay algo más que crees que va a ayudar a la investigadora en la prestación de apoyo a los estudiantes de ESOL de la escuela secundaria?

Appendix B

Script to Students before the Survey

Hello Everybody. Thank you for this opportunity to talk to you today.

I am here today to ask if you would be willing to participate in a study I am doing for the University of Maryland. Your answers will be confidential. We will not ask you for your name, and nobody will know that you were the students who participated. We are asking 150 students to take this survey, so that we can get enough information from a large group of students to help our leaders better support our students and help more ESOL students graduate.

Before we can ask you any survey questions, we need to ask you if you are willing to participate and answer the 32 questions that are on the computer. If you are comfortable and willing to participate, we will ask you to complete the first question that asks your permission to participate in my research. We will read the first part to you, and if you are still willing to participate, then we will do the survey together.

First, we will access the survey by logging into the Google site, which can be accessed on your computer. The link is posted on the site. Click on the link to begin.

The first question asks if you are willing to participate in this survey. Please click on the yes if you are, or type yes. If you choose no, the survey will stop and an alternative assignment is provided.

Are there any questions? If at any time a question is not clear, please raise your hand, so I can assist you. I only ask two things, please work individually and please answer honestly. The only answers we need are the honest answers. THANKS! Let's begin.

Appendix C

Script to Students before the Survey (Spanish)

Guió para estudiantes antes de la encuesta

Hola a todos. Gracias por esta oportunidad de hablar con usted hoy.

Estoy aquí hoy para preguntar si usted estaría dispuesto a participar en un estudio que estoy haciendo para la Universidad. Sus respuestas serán anónimas. No le voy a pedir su nombre, y nadie sabrá que ustedes eran los estudiantes que participaron. Estoy pidiendo a 150 estudiantes a tomar esta encuesta, por lo que yo puedo tener suficiente información de un gran grupo de estudiantes para ayudar a nuestros líderes a mejor apoyar a nuestros estudiantes y ayudar a más estudiantes de ESOL para graduarse.

Antes de que pueda pedirle alguna pregunta de la encuesta, necesito preguntará si usted está dispuesto a participar y contestar las 32 preguntas que están en la computadora. Si se siente cómodo y dispuesto a participar, yo pido que complete la primera pregunta que le pide su permiso para participar en mi investigación. Voy a leer la primera parte de usted, y si usted todavía está dispuesto a participar, entonces haremos la encuesta juntos.

Hay tres tipos de preguntas. Al comienzo de la encuesta, hay una parte de práctica. Vamos a hablar sobre la pregunta.

La primera pregunta es si están dispuestos a participar en esta encuesta. Por favor, haga clic en el sí, si tú eres, y el que no si no lo son. Si decide que no, la encuesta se detendrá y se proporciona una asignación alternativa.

¿Hay alguna pregunta? Si en cualquier momento una pregunta no está clara, por favor, levanten la mano, así que puedo ayudarle. Sólo le pido dos cosas, por favor trabaje

individual y por favor conteste con honestidad. Las únicas respuestas que necesito son las respuestas honestas. ¡GRACIAS! Vamos a empezar.

Appendix D

Focus Group Questions

Script: Good Morning. Thank you so much for taking the time to be here today to talk about school and family. I hope to ask you a few questions about school in your country and school in the United States. I would like to learn more about what helps you in school and what makes school challenging.

All of the ideas that you share today are confidential. That means that nobody will know who said it, and nobody's name will be written in our notes. We are capturing your conversation by taking notes on the computer.

Here's what I ask from everyone who is here:

- 1) Please feel safe to express your ideas and tell the truth.
- 2) There is no wrong answer.
- 3) Please do not talk about this conversation with anyone else after you leave here today.

We want to learn from you. We want to know how to help more students be successful in school and graduate from high school. If I ask you a question, you can answer it or choose not to answer it. I want to say thank you again and I look forward to our discussion. Are there any questions before we begin with our questions?

I would like to start with an introduction.

- 1) Please tell me where you are from, what grade you are in, and something you like about school, but no names.

- 2) Before you came to the United States, what grade did you complete in your country?
How much reading and writing did you do in your classes?
- 3) Did you travel with your family when you came here? If not, who did you travel with
and how long were you separated from the family you are living with now?
- 4) How old you were when you first came to school in the United States, and what
surprised you?
- 5) What has helped you learn English?
- 6) What do teachers do to help you in school?
- 7) How do students support or not support you in school?
- 8) Who do you live with now? How do they support you or not support you in school?
- 9) What makes school challenging or difficult?
- 10) Do you work? How many hours do you work? How do you balance school and work?
- 11) What are your goals for this year? Next year? In three to five years?
- 12) What do you wish your teachers or administrators knew about you?
- 13) Do you have any questions for me?

Thank you for your time to talk openly and honestly. Your answers will help us better
help students from all over Anonymous Unified District. Again, thanks!

Appendix E

Focus Group Questions in Spanish

Guión: Buenas tardes. Muchas gracias por tomarse el tiempo para estar aquí hoy para hablar acerca de la escuela y la familia. Esperamos hacerle unas cuantas preguntas sobre la escuela en su país y en la escuela en los Estados Unidos. Me gustaría aprender más acerca de lo que le ayuda en la escuela y lo que hace la escuela desafiante.

Todas las ideas que se comparten hoy son confidenciales. Eso significa que nadie sabrá quién lo dijo, y el nombre de nadie será escrito en nuestras notas. Vamos tomar las notas en la computadora cuando estamos hablando.

Esto es lo que pido de todos los que están aquí:

- 1) Por favor, siéntase seguro para expresar sus ideas y decir la verdad.
- 2) No hay una respuesta equivocada.
- 3) Por favor, no hables de esta conversación con alguien más después de salir de aquí hoy.

Quiero aprender de usted. Si te hago una pregunta, puede contestar o elegir no responder a ella. Quiero dar las gracias de nuevo y deseo mucho nuestra discusión.

¿Hay alguna pregunta antes de empezar con nuestras preguntas?

Me gustaría comenzar con una introducción.

- 1) Por favor, dime de dónde eres, en qué grado se encuentra, y algo que le gusta de la escuela, pero no nombres.
 - 2) Antes de venir a los Estados Unidos, ¿Qué grado has completado en su país?
- ¿Cuánta lectura y escritura tuvistes en tus clases?

- 3) ¿Viajó con su familia cuando usted vino aquí? Si no es así, ¿Con quién viajó y cuánto tiempo estuvistes separado de la familia que está viviendo ahora?
- 4) ¿Qué edad tenías cuando llegaste a la escuela en los Estados Unidos, y lo que te sorprendió?
- 5) ¿Qué te ha ayudado a aprender Inglés?
- 6) ¿Qué hacen los maestros para ayudarte en la escuela?
- 7) ¿Cómo te apoyan o no apoyan los estudiantes en la escuela?
- 8) ¿Con quién vive usted ahora? ¿Cómo te apoyan o no apoyan en la escuela?
- 9) ¿Qué hace la escuela desafiante o difícil?
- 10) ¿Usted trabaja? ¿Cuántas horas trabaja usted? ¿Cómo equilibrar la escuela y el trabajo?
- 11) ¿Cuáles son sus objetivos para este año? ¿El próximo año? ¿En tres a cinco años?
- 12) ¿Qué desea que sus maestros o administradores sabían acerca de usted?
- 13) ¿Tiene alguna pregunta para mí?

Gracias por su tiempo por hablar abierta y honestamente. Sus respuestas me ayudarán a ayudar mejor a los estudiantes de todas las Escuelas Públicas de Anonymous. Una vez más, ¡gracias!

Appendix F

Email to Principals

Communication to principal about the Latino English Language Learners' survey

From: ahanks@umd.edu

Sent: August 8, 2015 8:11 am

To: Principal of Selected High School with ESOL Program

Greetings, Principal,

I am requesting your support to conduct a survey with your ESOL students as part of my UMD doctoral research. I would like to contact your ESOL teachers and request their permission to have a researcher visit their classrooms over the next few weeks. Ideally, a research conduit would spend twenty minutes in each classroom to conduct a survey asking about our students' prior education challenges, current education supports, and future education goals. We would also like to conduct a focus group with your advanced ESOL level students.

Because only two out of three ELLs graduate in AUD, I hope to identify the supports that we provide to our students from their perspective. The study will ask several questions about how our students define the value of a high school diploma and the role graduation plays in achieving their own long-term goals. My goal is to survey at least 50 ELLs from your high school and meet with up to 12 of them in a focus group. Students who participate in the survey will be entered in a drawing for gift cards. The students in the focus group will receive breakfast or snacks.

Both the University of Maryland and Anonymous Unified District (IRB) have approved this study. Attached to this email is a description of the study, as well as the IRB approval from both UMD and AUD.

Thank you so much for your consideration in allowing me to survey your students. I look forward to hearing from you. Please let me know within the next week if I can contact your ESOL teachers. Also, please know that the decision to participate is solely your own decision and will not affect your role or our relationship, as this study is part of my dissertation.

Greatly appreciated,
Alison Hanks-Sloan
ahanks@umd.edu

Appendix G

Email to Teachers

Communication to teachers about the Latino English Language Learners' survey

To: (ESOL Teacher)

From: ahanks@umd.edu

I am requesting your support to conduct a survey with your ESOL students as part of my UMD doctoral research. Because only two out of three ELLs graduate in AUD, I hope to identify the supports that we provide to our students from their perspective. The study will ask several questions about how our students define the value of a high school diploma and the role graduation plays in achieving their own long-term goals. My goal is to survey at least 150 ELLs from at least three of our high schools with ESOL programs.

I have a few requests as you are an ESOL teacher at one of the three schools. I would like to ask you for your support in surveying your ESOL students during the first month of school. Ideally, I would like to request twenty minutes to survey Latino ESOL students in your classes through an online survey asking about our students' prior education challenges, current education supports, and future education goals.

If you choose to agree, here's what I would ask from you:

- A) respond to the email with a few possible times that work
- B) distribute the consent letters for the students who are under 18 years of age to have their families sign during the first week of school
- C) collect the letters
- D) schedule a 20 minute window when a researcher can survey your students and access computers with Internet connection
- E) identify potential focus group participants who are in advanced ESOL and have been in the school district for at least two years

Both the University of Maryland and Anonymous Unified District Institutional Review Board (IRB) have approved this study. Attached to this email is a description of the study, as well as the IRB approval from both UMD and AUD. Thank you so much for your consideration. Please let me know within the next week if I can schedule some time to conduct the surveys with your students by responding to this email about your classes and available dates. Also, please know that the decision to participate is solely your own decision and will not affect your role or our relationship, as this study is part of my dissertation.

Greatly appreciated,
Alison Hanks-Sloan
ahanks@umd.edu

Appendix H

Letter to Parents of Students Taking the Survey

Communication to parents requesting students' permission to participate in the survey

August 24, 2015

My name is Alison Hanks-Sloan. I am a doctoral student at the University of Maryland. I am also an employee at Anonymous Unified District. At the University, I am studying about how we can better support our high school ESOL students graduate.

I am requesting your support and signature to conduct a survey with your child to find out how we can better support ESOL students in graduating from high school. The survey will be provided on a computer and will be conducted during class. There are only 32 questions, and your child will be asked about supports, challenges, and future education goals. Twelve students will also be selected to participate in a discussion group.

Your child's answers will be confidential. No names will be collected, and nobody will be able to identify your child's answers.

Please sign the attached Consent Form within the next five days and send it back to your child's teacher if you agree to allow your child take the survey.

Also, please know that both the University of Maryland and Anonymous Unified District Institutional Review Board (IRB) have approved this study. Attached to this email is a description of the study, as well as the IRB approval from both UMD and AUD.

The decision to allow your child to participate is your own and will not affect your child in any way. If you have any questions, please contact me: Alison Hanks-Sloan, ahanks@umd.edu or my advisor, Dr. David Imig, dimig@umd.edu, 301-405-7850.

Thank you so much for your support in allowing me to learn from our students.

Greatly appreciated,

Alison

Appendix I

Letter to Parents of Students Taking the Survey (Spanish Translation)

24 de agosto 2015

Mi nombre es Alison Hanks-Sloan. Soy una estudiante de doctorado de la educación en la Universidad de Maryland. También trabajo en las Escuelas Públicas de Anonymous. He sido una maestra de ESOL. Yo también solía trabajar con la Oficina de ESOL y la Oficina Internacional de Consejería Estudiantil (ISCO). En la Universidad, estoy estudiando cómo podemos apoyar mejor a nuestros estudiantes de ESOL para graduarse de la escuela secundaria.

Solicito su apoyo y su firma para realizar una encuesta con sus estudiantes de ESOL como parte de mi investigación doctoral de la UMD. Me gustaría tener su permiso para hablar con su hijo en su salón de clases de ESOL este mes. Idealmente, me gustaría pasar veinte minutos con todos los estudiantes durante una visita a la clase para completar una encuesta de 32 preguntas. Con su permiso, los estudiantes toman un examen en la computadora y las preguntas serán sobre los desafíos de nuestros estudiantes anteriores a la educación, apoyos educativos actuales y futuras metas educativas. En las preguntas le pedimos a nuestros estudiantes acerca de su escuela en el pasado y el presente. También le preguntaré acerca de los apoyos, los retos y las futuras metas educativas.

Todas las encuestas serán anónimas, se recogen sin nombre y no hay maestros que sean capaz de identificar cómo respondieron los estudiantes. La información ayudará a los investigadores a desarrollar sugerencias sobre cómo apoyar mejor a nuestros estudiantes. Yo estaré recogiendo las respuestas, no el maestro o el director, porque quiero investigar las maneras en que podemos ayudar a los estudiantes de ESOL. Todas las respuestas se recogerán sin nombres.

Tanto la Universidad de Maryland y de la Junta de Revisión Institucional (IRB) de las Escuelas Públicas de Anonymous han aprobado este estudio. Se adjunta a este correo electrónico una descripción del estudio, así como la aprobación del IRB de parte de la UMD y AUD.

Muchas gracias por su apoyo en lo que me permite aprender de nuestros estudiantes. Por favor firme este formulario dentro de los próximos cinco días, si podemos tener su permiso para que podamos hacer la encuesta a su hijo(a). También, por favor sepa que la decisión de participar es únicamente su propia decisión y no afecta a su estudiante o al grado de su hijo, ya que este estudio es parte de mi tesis y trabajo de la universidad.

Muy apreciada,
Alison Hanks-Sloan
ahanks@umd.edu

Appendix J

Letter to Parents of Students Participating in Focus Groups

August 24, 2015

My name is Alison Hanks-Sloan. I am a doctoral student at the University of Maryland. I am an employee in Anonymous Unified District. At the University, I am studying about how we can better support our high school ESOL students graduate.

I am requesting your support and signature a second time to allow your student to participate in a focus group. This is an opportunity to talk with the interviewer and up to twelve students in a discussion group. We will discuss the questions from the survey in more detail. It will allow us to learn more about the supports and challenges by having a conversation together. Breakfast or snacks will be provided to the students who participate.

Your child's answers will be confidential. No names will be collected, and nobody will be able to identify your child's answers.

Please sign the attached Consent Form within the next five days and send it back to your child's teacher if you agree to allow your child participate in the focus group.

Also, please know that both the University of Maryland and Anonymous Unified District Institutional Review Board (IRB) have approved this study. Attached to this email is a description of the study, as well as the IRB approval from both UMd and AUD.

The decision to allow your child to participate is your own and will not affect your child in any way. If you have any questions, please contact me: Alison Hanks-Sloan, ahanks@umd.edu, or my advisor, Dr. David Imig, dimig@umd.edu, 301-405-7850. Again, thank you so much for your support in allowing me to learn from our students.

Greatly appreciated,
Alison

Appendix K

Aspirations Responses on Survey

25. In one year from now, I want to be...

En un año a partir de ahora, yo quiero ser...

- estilista
- A good student, don't get in gangs, be working.
- I want to speak english perfect, and are better in everything in the school.
- un estudiante con buenos records en la high school
- police
- finish the high school
- eleventh grade in high school
- graduado de la secundaria
- Una persona que sabe hablar ingles.
- un mejor estudiante y mejorar mi ingles
- i want to be a student and graduated from high school
- In one year from now i want to be in the 11 grade.
- i want to be student and graduate from high school
- estudiar
- mejor estudiante
- graduada de High School
- aprender mejor el ingles y terminar la escuela
- i want to go collect
- estar en el 12
- graduate to the high school
- a professional player os soccer.
- graduada de la escuela secundaria
- graduated from high school
- un muchacho mas estudioso
- un buen estudiante en la escuela y tener unas buenas notas
- quisiera ser una peersona quque me pueda defender en bien con ingles y saliendo de highschool.
- quiero ser una persona de preparada
- seguir estudiando
- un buen hombre
- graduarme de high school y trabajar
- Mejor en siertas cosas
- seguir mis estudios.

- si logro graduarme este ano quiero ir a college y tratar de ser un asistente medico o policia .
- Estudiante Responsable
- Pilicia
- siempre una buena persona y estar en el grado 11
- quiero ser una mejor persona mejorar lo que en este ano hice mal y poder demostra que todo es posible en la vida.
- un estudiante que se gradua de secundaria en estados unidos
- estudiante de la highschool mas responsable
- graduada de la escuela
- graduada de la school
- Quisiera estar en el grado 11 y que me pueda graduar de la high school que es lo que mas quiero.
- Graduarme de la high school para ingresar a la Universidad.
- graduado
- graduate from high school
- a professional soccer player
- quiero graduarme e ir a college y hablar mucho mejor el ingles
- a good student and a good person
- graduarme de la escuela
- youtuber cantante y doctor
- yo quiero aprender muy bien el ingles
- ser una buena persona y poder ayudar a las demas personas en lo que yo pueda
- estudiante
- una persona que habla el english para poder estudiar mas para un mejor futuro para mi
- un buen estudiante
- doctor
- doctora
- a senior
- i want to graduate high school and go to college
- get my car
- pg college student
- quiero ir a grado 12 y salir de la escuela
- Graduarme
- graduada de high
- senior
- Yo quiero seguir estudiando.
- senior
- seguir estudiando
- un graduado de la escuela secundaria
- In a year from now I want to be in college studying to be a dentist
- kiero ir al grado 11

- Bueno mi primer objetivo es graduarme de la escuela
- una persona que pueda expresarse muy bien hablando ingles
- Yo quiero graduarme salir de high school y poder asistir a college y continuar con mis dreams.
- un exelente estudiante para poder superarme.
- aprender el ingles para poder ser doctora
- I want to going to the community college for two years because I want to study radiology and want to take a master degree on computers
- un soldado y sevir a esta patria para agradecer lo que este pais a hecho por mi.
- Espero ascender de grado en mi escuela.
- No he planeado nada
- Estudiante
- terminar school
- Graduado De High School
- alguien trabajador para ayudar a mi familia con los recursos
- i want to study in the University because i want to be a enginer
-
- alguien muy inportante y salir a delante con mis estudios
- quiero pasar a mi siguiente niver de secundaria
- estudiante
- quiero abanzar al siguiente grado y alcansar mis metas
- 11 grade
- A good student.
- Una estudiante de college de arquitectura
- a senior
- engineer i wanna know how to fix cars
- doctor
- Muy positiva, responsable.
- I want to get a job
- I want to be a good student with honors
- I want to be a good students and speak a good English
- Teacher

N=149

26. In five years from now, I want to be...; En cinco años a partir de ahora, yo quiero ser...

- Graduated from High School, be at college, be working, have a wife.
- I want to go to the college and gonna be graduate.
- un estudiante graduado y honrado
- police

- police officer
- finish the high school
- police officer
- A graduated person.
- quiero estar en la universidad sacando un titulo
- i want to be an university student
- In five year from now i want to go to the college.
- i want to be an university student
- estudiante
- be in college
- A psicologa
- yo quiero terminar la universidad
- study in college
- me gustaria estar graduado de secundaria y si puedo seguir estudiando
- in college
- a plumber
- a nurse
- a policeman
- policia
- me gustaria seguir estudiando para poder llegar a ser alguien en la vida
- un estudiante de la universidad
- maestra de niños especiales
- tener un buen trabajo para ser alguien importante en la vida
- doctor
- graduarme de college
- Editor de 3D
- i want to be in college
- tener una familia con 2 hijos y un perrito bonito :3 :3
- asistente medico o policia
- Estudiante De La Universidad
- doctor
- una estudiante de alguna buena universidad
- quiero ser el orgullo de mi familia poder tener un trabajo y ser la hija que mi mamá espera que sea y sobre todo cumplir mis metas
- un estudiante de una universidad
- estar en el college estudiando mi carrera de medico forense
- graduada de la universidad
- estudiante de medicina
- Me gustaria tener el trabajo que yo quiero y que seria de gran ayuda para mi futuro.
- Pensar en terminar la carrera que pude haber tomado.
- asistente medico o police
- si tengo la posibilidad de dinero podre ir a college

- lawyer
- estar terminando mi universidad y ser una veterinaria o trabajar en un salon de belleza
- i will be a doctor
- enfermera
- youtuber cantante y doctor
- quiero trabajar para ahorrar dinero par la univercidad
- un profecional
- una joven graduada de school y anspirar a los jovenes
- doctora
- quiero ser alguien quien pueda defenderme por mi misma en este pais y lograr mis metas
- Un profesional graduado en la universidad
- norse
- an engineer
- i want to be a docter
- i eant to get my busynes
- graduate from college
- quiero ir a la univercidad
- Estar en las Fuerzas Aerias de los Estados Unidos
- ser doctorqa
- doctora
- Yo quiro ir al colegio.
- asistente medico
- estar estudiando una carrera
- yo quiero ser un estudiante universitario
- I want to be a Professional Dentist
- al college
- Yo quiero ir a la universidad porque quiero estudiar para ser doctora.
- una persona que esta en la universidades
- i want to be out of college
- un empresario
- doctora
- if my head change in the next years I Think Im will be always focus in have a personal job like something relationship with the community latina
- yo quiero estar en la univrsidad y estudiando para doctor.
- una cosmetologa
- espero estae en la universidad.
- non he pensado
- Deportista
- terminar la universidad
- Abogado
- un travbajado

- i want to be a ingenier
 -
 - quiero ser un estudiante de universidad
 - quiero sacar la secundaria
 - trabajar
 - yo quiero tener un trabajo estable para ayudar a mi familia
 - graduate from high school
 - a good student, a graduated from high school, a worker and a pshychologist
 - Una arquitecta
 - finishin gollege
 - engineer
 - Doctor
 - agarrar permiso para ayudar a los enfermos
 - Maestra de Espanol, persona llena de expectativas, mostrarale a los alumnos que todo es mejor si confias en ti mismo.
 - join in the Air force
 - I want to be a universitarian but a good one with just 100% on my notes
-

N=153

27. In ten years from now, I want to be...

En diez años partir de ahora, yo quiero ser...

- graduarme de college y tener un buen trabajo y mi carro
- Have a own house, have sons, a good work, have a College diploma, have cars, and my own business.
- I want to have a job, my house and help my mother.
- police
- oficial de policia
- no lo he pensado
- oficial de la policia
- Un graduado de High School.
- estar terminando un titulo en la universidad
- i want to be a good teacher of history
- In ten year from now i want to be a teacher of Esol class to teach to the guns whom are coming in the United States and teach them a new language that is english.
- i want good teacher
- tener un negocio
- i want to be in military
- a professional phycologia
- tener mi propio trabajo y mis propias cosas(casa,carro)etc.
- mechanic

- tener un titulo de universidad o college
- in my own company
- nurse
- working as a policeman
- futbolista profesional
- una buena detective o poder ser una cosmetologa
- aver salido de la universidad y estar ejerciendo mi profesion
- madre de hogar
- una perzona triunfadora con una familia
- el mejor doctor
- abogada
- Jefe de una empreza
- Architect
- tener un trabajo estable y con muuuuchaaaa plaaataaaaa :v :V :v
- tener mi familia con mi carrera y ser feliz.
- Agente de la CIA
- doctor
- una pediatra
- quiero ser una dela primeras en mi familia en tener una una profesion como lo es sicologia
- ingeniero
- un medico forence
- secretaria o empresaria
- ciudadada de los Estados Unidos
- Una gran persona que pueda tener un buen trabajo y un bonito hogar.
- Un gran profesional con una gran familia.
- ASistente medico o police
- tener mi carrera profesional (fbi agent) quiero tener a salvo a US
- judge
- una veterinaria o bien una disenadora
- father
- doctora
- viajar por el mundo
- un profecoinal en algo como electricista
- un doctor
- una abogada para defender a las personas de mis pais que immigrant aca a los estados unidos buscando una mejor vida para ellos y sus familia por que yo lo mismo hise immigrar a los estados unidos para POD
- hacer mi familia
- tener mi trabajo seguro y tener una familia que crecer
- Un maestro de Ingles
- have my own clinic
- go to the ARMY

- get my own bussinesess
- quiero tener mi carrera de criminologa
- General de las Fuerzas Aerias
- formar mi familia
- doctora en operaciones
- Yo quiero ser una ingeniera en sistema.
- Medico
- pediatra
- yo quiero ser un profesor de matematicas o un ingeniero en sistema de computacion
- I want to have my own clinic
- la universidad
- Bueno yo espero que para ese tiempo haber terminado mi carrera de doctora ir trabajar en lo que mas me gusta.
- una persona con una carrera con la que pueda trabajar
- i want to have my college degree
- un empresario con mi propia compania.
- una muchacha superada en mi futuro
- en diez anos pienso que puedo estar ocupando un lugar importante talvez trabajando como asistente en las oficinas del capitolio porque siento que inspirar ala comunidad latina a year mas alla de lo que la opinion de ciertos candidatos politicos tienen sobre los hispanos podemos realmente hacer la diferencia
- ser un doctor y ayudar a mis hijos y a mi familia
- una persona independiente de si misma
- Un asistente medico.
- independiente
- Entrenador
- Abogada
- Abogado
- un trabajador
- i want to be a ingenier and i want to have a family
- abogada
- quiero ser un abogado
- tener mi propia compania
- doctora
- yo quiero vivir con mi familia en una casa propia
- i want to be an architect
- a good student, a good mother, a good wife, have my own business.
- Una profesional arquitecta y pediatra de niños
- work family
- a professional enginner
- doctor

- nurse
 - yo pienso que en 10 anos yo quisiera tener una familia para poder tener motivos ppara seguir.
 - A pilot
 - I want to be a dietist or Doctor of Diabetes or the hearth or another but I want to be a important person
 - A good worker and have a good work
 - Teacher
-

$N = 101$

Appendix L

Last Survey Question Open Ended Responses

32. Is there anything else that you think will help the researcher in providing supports to high school ESOL students?

Hay algo mas que crees que va a ayudar a la investigadora en la prestacion de apoyo a los estudiantes de ESOL de la escuela secundaria?

Original Responses	Translated Responses
More support to new students, are always as "Now what do I've to do?", I can say that because i felt that. Too I know that for feel safe a lot of new students get in mini gangs and begin to do trouble or bullying to chill students.	
I think that she need help more the students that come, because when you came to the U.S you don't know how speak, how communicate with the other people. Also she need took to the student's how they feel in this country and in the school.	
ayudar a los alumnos que son victimas de rasismo	Help students who are victims of racism
brindar mas ayuda a los jovenes que fueron pandilleros en antiguo pais	provide more assistance to young people who were gang members in their past country
creo que deverian tratar con respeto a las personas	I think they shoud treat people with respect
Preguntar a los estudiantes de los 9 grados como se sienten? Y si necesitan ayuda.	Ask 9th grade students how they feel and if they need help

creo que habemos muchos jovenes que somos madres solteras que no podemos lograr graduarnos como en mi caso solamente tomando mi ged pero queremos continuar la Universidad me gustaria que haya algun tipo de ayuda para nosotras porque estoy muy interesada en continuar mis metas

que nunca se rindan que sigan con las carreras que tienen pensado para que tengan un buen futuro y una familia increible y que estudien para cumplir sus metas

insentivar los alumnos d Esol para que se esfuenzen en sus tareas y que les pregunten como esta su familia

pues la verdad no tengo ideas para comentar sobre eso.

No sabia como

creo que puede ayudar a los estudianbtes tener programas aparte de ESOL para ayudarles conmlas tareas y preguntas sobre el lenguaje .Tambien puede ayudar un seguro medico como atencion dentista y medica general . Lo mas importantecon progamas de becas para imigrantes que quieren ir a la universidad

Si, salir adelante con esfuerzo y sudor.

mmmm pues la verdad yo creo que si, porque asi como ella hara todo su esfuerzo para que nosotros podamos a entender un poquito mas de lo que nosotros aprendimos nos podria ayudar un poco mas en otras ocasiones cuando nos encontremos con ella.....

I think that we should help many young single mothers who can not achieve graduation like me by taking my GED but only want to continue the University. I would like to have some sort of help for us because I am very interested in pursuing my goals.

never give up to follow the careers they plan to have for a good future and an incredible family and to study to meet your goals

provide ESOL students who are on task with incentives and ask them how their families are doing

Well to be honest, I don't have anything to say about this

I don't know what

I think she can help students have programs other than ESOL to help with homework and questions about language. She can help with health insurance, like a general dentist and medical care. It's imporatant to know about scholarships for immigrants who want to go to college.

Yes, with hard work and sweat you can succeed.

hmm, well the truth is that I really think so, because also it will make every effort so that we can understand a little more of what we learned we could help a little more on other occasions when we meet her

si deberian de ayudarlos con las materias que en realidad se requieren para graduarse y tambien cuando alguien es absente con continuidad tratar de ayudar preguntando ayudando porque falta mucho a la escuela y averiguar que es lo que pasa aveces no solo es porque quieran si no por que tienen problemas ya sean familiares o economicos y no tienen la ayuda de sus padres GRACIAS.

Pienso que estan asiendo un gran proyecto y felicidades y que sigan adelante y espero les ayude nuestras respuestas gracias.

Fuera bueno que en cada clase hubiese un asistente para que le ayude al maestro con los estudiantes hacer trabajos durante la clase o cosas que no entienda un estudiante que el asistente le ayude al estuudiante a entenderlo todo.

Que los maestros ayuden un poco mas a la hora de enseñar ingles como maestros bilingues o cosas asi porque uno no sabe ingles y que sea ingles intenso

tener mas profesores bilingue

Hy

si ella puede lograr este objetivo sera una gran ayuda para muchos jovenes mas que vengan a este pais

it will help teachers to stay after school for help other students

Que los programas de esol Deben ser espancidos a varias escuelas mas para ayudar a algunos estudiantes que no van a la escuela por que les queda muy lejos de la casa , mas becas para ir a college por que somos muchos los que queremos y deseamos ir a college y poder tener una mejoir oportunidad de superarse .

if they could help them with the classes that really matter and are required for graduation and also when someone is absent continuously to try to help them and asking about how to help them instead of blaming the kids because it is not their fault that they are missing so much school. They should try to help us and find out if we have problems with our family or economically or we don't have parental support. THANKS .

I think they're taking on a big project and congratulations and move on and hopefully help them by our answers .

It would be good to have an assistant in every class to help the teacher to work with students during class or things you do not understand that a student assistant helps the students to understand everything.

The teachers help a little more than the hour that they teach English as bilingual teachers or things like that because if you do not know English then you need intensive English support have more bilingual teachers

Hi

if she can achieve this goal, it will be a great help to many more young who come to this country

ESOL programs must be expanded to several more schools to help some students who do not attend school because they are very far from home, more scholarships to go to college because there are a lot of us who want and desire go college and to have a chance to get better opportunities.

Tener profesores mas profesionales en las escuelas

si en mucho porque hoy habran muchas oportunidades mas que todo en la univercidad

creo que esol deberia estar en muchas escuelas mas para que apoyen a lus alumnos que no hablan ingles y para q ellos aprendan y puedan superarse y ser una persona importante en este pais

hay veces que los hacen builyng porque no hablamos ingles o poruqe somos latinos.

que mejoren el programa de ESOL porque hay muchos estudiantes que no aprende mucho ingles en un ano o mas

si que pobgan mas jente latina quienes nos puedan ayudar cuando no sabemos inglkes y que siempre tengamos los mismos derechos

pueda que haya algo muy importante esque las personas a nuestro alrededor aveses no nos ayudan correctamente oh nuestros consejeros no nos ayudan mucho aveses hay que insister muchas veces para que me puedan ayudar y creo que deveria ser mas importante que nos traten como los de mas y nos ayuden de la misma marena.

si a poder hablar ingles a superarse para algo bueno

Nada mas quisiera resaltar que realmente siento cierta pena e indignasion de algunos profesores y estudiantes que nos descriminan y en algunas ocaciones nos desprecian por el comportamiento de algunos alumnos hispanos estoy dejando muy en claro que no somos oandilleros tampoco criminales somos estudiantes que realmente tenemos metas y miramos la vida de manera diferente al llegar a este pais poruqe nadie puede opinar de lo que no le toco vivir .

To have teachers with more professionalism in the schools

yes a lot because today there will be many more opportunities for everyone in college

I think that ESOL should be in more schools in order to support the students who do not speak English and so that they can learn and can overcome and be an important person in this country

sometimes there is builyng because we do not speak English or because we are Latinos.

that the best program is ESOL because there are many students that do not understand English in a year or more

I wish they would put more Hipsanic people who can help us when we don't know English and that we always have the same rights

She could help us because the people around us don't give us the right guidance sometimes and our counselors don't help us a lot of support. I believe what is most important is that they treat more of us the same way that they help other people

yes, to be able to speak English will let us overcome and do something good

I would like nothing more than to really stress that I truly feel some regret and indignation that some teachers and students discriminate against us and on some occasions they don't appreciate us and categorize all of the Hispanic students as gangsters but we are not criminals but we are students who really have goals and no one can make an assumption that they know about all the different things that we want to get out of this country.

si la confianza que nosotros como
estudiantes tenemos en todas las personas
que nos ayudan y las ganas y deseos de
salir adelante gracias a la ayuda de todos.

Yes, the confidence that we as students
have all the people who help us and the
desire and wishes to succeed with the help
of all.

i think so that 'the prince george country
need to change the scheduche of the
schools because we nee to have more time
for ESOL class than the another clases ,i
want more time for learn more i think all
students need more time in ESOL clas .

si ayudara a muchos jovenes q vendran a
la escuela y sera mejor la clase de ESOL y
gracias

yes, she will help many young people that
come to school and want to be better in
the ESOL class and thanks

a que se a serquen mas alos estudiantes y
hablar mas con ellos.

that being around more students to speak
more with them

no

entender a los estudiantes cun sus
problemas ya sea en la calle escuela u
ogar

To understand the students with their
problems and it doesn't matter where- at
school or at home

Something like we can due.

What we can do

no

Apoyando a los estudiantes animandolos
con pal bras y materials de information

Care about other students and help them
with words and informative materials

si

no

When's need to talk with my counselor I
can't because I have a different counselor
and she's not for Esol. She isn't patient so
it makes everything harder

No this is okay they help them a lot is
perfect

No

They should be more concerned

Solamente decirle y hacer conciencia a los estudiantes que ya pueden defenderse con el ingles que no molesten ni miren mal a los que no pueden

Only want to say that I would like for other students who speak English to have a sense of conscience and not tease the people who don't speak English

Yes help them to change their minds and show them that school is very important
Pienso que pueden explicar mas despacio en ingles

I think they can explain in English slower

Most student push around because they don't speck engilsh

Most students are pushed around because they don't speak English

always with a spanish teacher thta can be there explaining everthing.

No

is too many racism in school sometimes they prefer black people and they dont support soccer time because they prefer football

no

I don't think so.

for me im want to more English
la verdad nose en que les puede ayudar esto alos estudiantes de esol

The truth is that I don't know how they can help ESOL students

kisieran que uvieran maestros q ablen los dos idiomas espanol y English para q nos ensenen como pronunciar las palabras en ingles para q asi lijero aprendamos y podamos ablar mas lijero el English
espero q esta escuela y las otras q tenga esol q pongan amestros asi para q se aprenda mas lijero y uno de nino ispano pueda ablar ingles bien y con asento Americano

I would like to have teachers who speak both Spanish and English to teach us how to pronounce words in English so that it can be easier to learn. The teachers in ESOL schools should know both languages and the Hispanic child can speak English well and American accent

no

que nos ayuden a los estudiantes de ESOL a sentirlos major y de no ser descriminados "GRACIAS"

that she helps us ESOL students to feel better and not be discriminated "THANK YOU "

si que se an un poco mas extricto los maestro pero no pucho por que los chavos usan mucho la tecnoligia y no les ponen importancia .

yes that the teacher should be more strict but not by that much. We like to use technology but the teachers don't put much value into it.

no

no

no

Si para ayuda de nosotros los hispanos

Yes helping us Hispanics

No lo creo.

I don't think so

llegue por tren y avion

I arrived by train and plane.

Mi tia me ayuda. Estoy cuidado mis primos.

My aunt help me. I take care of my cousins.

$N = 69$

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